



Jordan Times

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Sharaa addresses General Assembly

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Syria said Tuesday repeal of a 1975 U.N. resolution equating Zionism with racism required Israel to stop occupying Arab territory and to give Palestinians the right to self-determination. "The United Nations resolution equating Zionism with racism was adopted as a result of Israeli occupation of the Arab territories and its continuous violation and discrimination against the Arabs in all walks of life," Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa said in a speech to the General Assembly. "The call for repealing this resolution requires, a priori, eliminating the substantial causes which prompted the United Nations to adopt this resolution: That is, to terminate the Israeli occupation of Arab lands and enable the Palestinian people to enjoy their right to self-determination." Mr. Sharaa was alluding to calls by a large number of speakers in the assembly during the past week, including U.S. President George Bush and Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin, for the Zionism-equals-racism resolution to be repealed.

Soviet Union sends message to Arafat

TUNIS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat has received an "important" message from the Soviet leadership, the Palestinian news agency Wafa said Tuesday. The contents of the message, handed to Mr. Arafat by the Soviet ambassador in Tunis, were not revealed. The Soviet Union is co-sponsoring the Middle East peace conference which the United States is trying to organize for later this month. Wafa said the PLO leader and the Soviet diplomat discussed latest developments regarding Palestinian and Middle East problems. They also examined the results of the Palestine National Council (PNC) which met in Algiers last week and debated its position regarding the peace conference. After conferring with Tunisia President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Mr. Arafat said the PNC had opted for peace but rejected Israeli conditions. He said the PNC "expressed its attachment to peace" but rejected the installation of Jewish settlements in the Israeli occupied territories. It wanted "a Palestinian peace and not capitulation as desired by Israel," he said.

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Iraq says dialogue with Kurds to resume

NICOSIA (R) — A new round of talks between the government and Kurdish guerrilla leaders on autonomy for Iraq's 3.5 million Kurds will start in Baghdad soon, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Tuesday. It quoted the daily newspaper Babel, owned by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, as saying the talks would resume to put the "final touches" on a draft autonomy bill worked out in August after four months of negotiations. INA gave no other details. The Kurdish guerrilla movement is divided over whether to accept the draft. Its opponents, led by Jalal Talabani of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, say it is not generous enough on the borders of an autonomous Kurdish region and on guarantees that Iraq as a whole will have a democratic system of government. Its advocates, led by Massoud Barzani of the Kurdish Democratic Party, say it is the best deal on offer. The Kurds opened autonomy talks with the government in April after a Kurdish rebellion collapsed and two million Kurds fled into the mountains on the borders with Iran and Turkey.

Saudis make oil gift to Turkey

ANKARA (AP) — Saudi Arabia has pledged \$1 billion of free oil to help Turkey modernize its military, a Turkish official said Tuesday. Kaya Toperi, a spokesman for President Turgut Ozal, said Saudi King Fahd had sent a message to Mr. Ozal, informing him of the Saudi government's decision. The oil would be a gift, Mr. Toperi said, adding it would be a part of a fund to be raised by some Gulf countries, the United States and Turkey. A foreign ministry official said Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates had also pledged to contribute to the fund which had been set up during the Gulf crisis. Turkey severed Iraq's oil exports by shutting a pipeline after its invasion of Kuwait in August last year. In the Gulf war, it allowed U.S. bombers to attack Iraq from a Turkish base. As part of an aid package organized by Gulf countries and the West to offset Turkey's economic losses, Saudi Arabia has already given Turkey \$1.1 billion worth of oil.

Argentine president visits Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Argentine leader Carlos Menem arrived in Israel Tuesday for the first visit by a South American president. Israel said the three-day visit was a chance to reinforce ties in agriculture and trade. Mr. Menem, whose country has Latin America's biggest Jewish community and is himself of Syrian descent, has frequently offered to mediate in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Press reports said this and his historically warm ties with Syria suggested U.S. efforts to convene a Middle East peace conference and the cause of Syrian Jewry might also be on the agenda.

First direct emigre flight turned back

TEL AVIV (AP) — The first direct flight carrying Soviet Jewish immigrants to Israel was forced to return to Moscow on Tuesday because the airline's operators failed to secure clearance to fly over Turkey. The flight is being run by Aeroflot, a subsidiary of the Soviet national airline Aeroflot, and had been due to land at Ben Gurion airport near Tel Aviv at about 4 p.m. (1400 GMT).

Soldiers retake Togo television

LOME (R) — Renegade soldiers retake control of Togo's national radio station Tuesday after an earlier failed coup in which six to eight people were reported killed, witnesses said. No other details were immediately available. Earlier on Tuesday Togo's prime minister, Kokou Koffifoh, appealed for calm in the small West African state and said the soldiers who had seized the radio and returned to the barracks and other had been restored (see page 8).

Baker expected back in Middle East soon

Israel to seek details of U.S. assurances to Arabs; Washington says no PLO dialogue

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel said Tuesday that U.S. Secretary of State James Baker would return to the Jewish state soon for more talks on a Middle East peace conference. Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's spokesman said the date of Mr. Baker's arrival had not yet been established but that the visit had been confirmed. Press reports said the U.S. envoy was expected on his eighth regional peace shuttle by mid-October. The United States hopes to convene Arab-Israeli talks this month. Invitations are expected to be issued soon but no date or venue has been fixed. Mr. Shamir told a cabinet meeting on Tuesday that Soviet Foreign Minister Boris Pankin would also arrive in the next few weeks to discuss renewing diplomatic ties with Israel ahead of a peace conference. The Soviet Union severed relations with Israel after the 1967 war. It has renewed consular and other ties in recent years. Israel Radio quoted Mr. Shamir as telling ministers that raising ties to full diplomatic status was condition for a Soviet role as a sponsor of the conference. Mr. Pankin said at the United Nations last week he hoped ties with Israel would be reestablished in October. Mr. Shamir also told the cabinet Tuesday he expected to hear from Mr. Baker what he has promised the Arabs to bring them to the peace conference, Israel Radio said. Shamir spokesman Ehud Gol refused to confirm or deny the radio report. Mr. Baker said last week he was willing to return to the Middle East if necessary. Mr. Baker has given Israel, the Arab states and the Palestinians documents outlining the American positions on the negotiations. The Americans have said the assurances to the different parties would be made available to all before the start of the conference, and that no secret promises were made. Still, unconfirmed reports have been circulating in Israel about various secret American promises to the Arabs, such as Washington backing complete Israel withdrawal from Syria's Golan Heights. Briefing the cabinet on the peace process, Mr. Shamir said he would seek a full accounting during Mr. Baker's next visit of all the assurances given to the Palestinians and Arab states, the radio said. Two headline ministers, Yitval Neeman and Rehavam Zeevi, again demanded that Israel pull out of the conference, the radio said. Mr. Neeman reportedly said Washington has adopted positions hostile to Israel and is no longer an honest broker. The United States has ruled out reopening a dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) even though a hard-line PLO leader who caused trouble with Washington was removed from its Executive Committee. "Restoration of the U.S.-PLO dialogue is not an issue that we're addressing at this point," State Department spokesman Margaret Tutwiler told reporters. Ms. Tutwiler reiterated what Mr. Baker said last week — that he plans to meet soon with Palestinians on details related to their participation in the peace conference. But she said a meeting had not

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Ben Bella urges Arab solidarity

AMMAN (J.T.) — Former Algerian President Ahmad Ben Bella, who is currently on a visit to Jordan, Tuesday called for Arab unity as the only alternative to counter challenges facing the Arab Nation. In an interview with Jordan Television, Mr. Ben Bella stressed the importance of Arab unity and the need to prepare the Arab Nation "for the battle, not necessarily a military battle but a battle to achieve the unity, to enable them to deal with the new situations resulting from the emergence of new world order." Mr. Ben Bella said the situation in the Arab region warranted efforts for Arab solidarity, given the current divisions among Arab ranks and peoples. He called for respect of human rights and respect for the people themselves. Mr. Ben Bella said that political pluralism and democracy have become basic issues.

Crown Prince: Palestinians will present own case at peace talks

WASHINGTON, which is trying to organize the peace conference for later this month, suggested a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation as a way round Israel's refusal to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). The Crown Prince welcomed the outcome of last week's meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC), which backed U.S.-Soviet efforts to convene the peace talks in October. The PNC did not commit Palestinians to attend the talks. It left it up to the PLO to decide whether to accept Jordan's offer to let Palestinians join its delegation. The Crown Prince said the PNC stand was proof that the Arab and Palestinian side would not be the party to be blamed by the world if the peace process faltered "even though there are vital issues such as Israeli settlements, Jerusalem and Palestinian right to self-determination that will be dwelled at the talks." While there is a certain criteria for the immigration of Soviet Jewish people, there is no legal, economic or social criteria for the migration of Arabs, Prince Hassan said. He questioned the way the world looks at the Arab region, saying that it emanates from the fear of what is called extremism, terrorism or the desire to control oil resources and energy. He said that world public opinion was ready to view this region from a perspective based on care for the Arab people. He criticized the double standards the world applies when dealing with Middle Eastern issues. Prince Hassan also said that Arab writers, journalists and media representatives have a responsibility in explaining the life of the Arab people, whether in Palestine, Iraq, Sudan or elsewhere. He said that this is the decade of inter-regional cooperation. Answering a question about convening a summit for the Arab states bordering Israel — namely, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and the Palestinian Authority — he said: "We will be there."

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IMF, World Bank delegation holding talks with officials

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — An International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation Tuesday submitted to the government a set of specific recommendations to address the deficit in Jordan's fiscal budget and to further absorb an IMF-prescribed restructuring programme into the Kingdom's economic policies, informed sources said. The recommendations, drawn up after three weeks of discussions between the government and the IMF delegation as well as a team representing the World Bank, are believed to include removal of subsidies on foodstuffs, municipal water and several other areas and an increase in utility charges, such as telephone and power supply, as well as some other measures to reduce government expenditure. No official confirmation was available on the issue, but the sources told the Jordan Times that the government was expected to present its views on the recommendations to the visiting delegations before Friday. "The main objective of the recommendations is to reduce the deficit in the budget, cut government expenditure, and increase revenues," said one of the sources. "But no recommendation is binding on the government, which can exercise its own options as long as the net objective is served," added the source, who requested anonymity. —According to diplomatic sources, the very fact that the IMF and the World Bank had come to the discussion in a joint delegation is indicative of the sympathetic approach

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Shamir cools speculation of early Israeli election

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir tried to dampen speculation on Tuesday that he favoured early elections, that might short-circuit Middle East peace talks. "He believes we should have elections as planned for November 1992," Ehud Gol, Mr. Shamir's spokesman, told Reuters. Sarah Doron, leader of Mr. Shamir's Likud Party, said Sunday that the party was ready to consider advancing elections to become small headline factions opposed to the proposed talks might quit the government. Mr. Shamir's critics have long suspected he would call elections to avoid entering a peace conference which the United States, Israel's guardian ally, wants to convene this month. No date or venue has been fixed but Washington says it hopes to issue invitations soon. On Tuesday, Israel Radio said Mr. Shamir opposed calling elections because he feared the opposition Labour Party might manage to form a coalition if his government collapsed. Mr. Gol refused to comment on the radio report. Labour has called for a parliamentary no-confidence vote for next week although it alone cannot bring down the government.

EC renews warning to Israel

TEL AVIV (AP) — A stalemate over the European Community's (EC) request to appoint an administrator for Palestinian aid programmes could hurt Israeli efforts to improve trade relations with Europe, an EC official warned Tuesday. EC efforts to name a representative hit a snag in July, when Israeli officials insisted on having a say in selecting projects for European funding in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. At the same time, Israel is seeking improved trade provisions in advance of the planned 1992 European market unification. "Obviously, any disappointment the EC may feel would make one less enthusiastic on going ahead on certain other things," said J. Gwyn Morgan, head of the EC's delegation to Israel. Mr. Morgan told the Foreign Press Association that two years of negotiations to send an EC representative to administer aid programmes in the occupied territories ran into difficulties this summer. "We had hoped to have an agreement in July, but at the last moment there were difficulties presented which prevented the EC from accepting the terms that our Israeli partners wanted to have for this person," Mr. Morgan said. Israeli reports say Defence Minister Moshe Arens has insisted on vetting projects. Mr. Morgan said the EC insisted on full control. "We are not prepared to change our basic principle of deciding ourselves, as we do in every country in the world where the EC gives aid," Mr. Morgan said. "We don't mind consulting, we don't mind taking advice. But we decided our projects ourselves." The decision to send an EC administrator, who would have diplomatic status, was made by EC foreign ministers at a conference in Dublin in 1989. The administrator is to help improve management of programmes for Palestinians that have grown from \$2.6 million in 1987 to more than \$13 million this year and \$15.6 million in 1992. The EC funds development projects in the occupied territories aimed at increasing exports, improving education and providing health services. Mr. Morgan said talks were still under way with Israel on improving trade cooperation.

Iraq clears helicopter flights for U.N. team

BAHRAIN (Agencies) — A team of U.N. ballistic weapons experts flew Tuesday to Baghdad ready to test out Iraq's willingness to allow U.N. inspectors free use of helicopters to scan the entire country for its weapons of mass destruction. So far, U.N. inspectors tracking down Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, and ballistic missiles, have only been able to operate in the vicinity of Baghdad for lack of helicopters. The U.N. special Commission which oversees the process was expecting "diplomatic clearance" from Baghdad to allow into Iraq the three German helicopters on standby in Turkey. "It's not a major problem," said the commission's regional office chief in Bahrain, Alastair Livingston. He said once the clearance came through, the helicopters would be in Iraq within 48 hours. The Iraqis, whose holdup of the helicopters sparked one of the major confrontations with Baghdad in recent weeks over its failure to comply with Gulf war ceasefire demands by the Security Council, have insisted on a liaison officer flying with the U.N. team. Mr. Livingston said that was acceptable procedure, while Douglas Englund, an American who leads the 20-member ballistic team, said earlier that he welcomed Iraqi presence as a safety precaution for his men. Mr. Englund said he will use the helicopters to reach the distant Syrian borders and supervise Iraqi destruction of the 28 Scud missile launchers they used to attack Israel during the Gulf war. He also intends to blow up one assembled and one still incomplete "super-gun" halfway between Baghdad and Mosul, while also planning to make several surprise calls on undeclared Iraqi sites that may still harbour the long-range ballistics they also fired at Saudi Arabia.

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Soviet military said to propose cutting forces by almost half

MOSCOW (R) — The Soviet military unveiled plans Tuesday to cut the armed forces by almost a half from four million by 1994, the independent news agency Interfax said. It said First Deputy Defence Minister Pavel Grachev gave the news to a committee of the Russian parliament. The proposed reduction reported by Interfax was more radical than that given by Defence Minister Yevgeny Shaposhnikov when he told a Japanese newspaper this week that it would be from 3.7 million to three million men. Colonel-General Grachev told legislators the cuts would leave a Soviet force of between two million and two and half million men. He said the military, now dependent on conscription, would start to become an all-volunteer professional force from next January. The obligatory term of military service would be cut from two years to one in 1995 when it hoped that 45 to 50 per cent of the force would be volunteers, Gen. Grachev said. No comment on the Interfax report was immediately available from the Soviet Defence Ministry. Gen. Grachev said top priority should be given to creating a unified Soviet command with control over nuclear forces. He criticised plans by some breakaway Soviet republics to set up their own armed forces, Interfax said. He spoke to a joint session of parliamentary committees on conditions for servicemen of the Russian Federation, largest of the 12 surviving Soviet republics. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev has appointed a group of advisers to prepare a substantive response in a matter of days to the sweeping U.S. nuclear arms cut announced last week. His spokesman Andrei Grachev told a news conference the Soviet response would be "concrete and corresponding in scale." The U.S. cuts, announced by President George Bush Friday, include the destruction of all U.S. ground-launched tactical nuclear missiles and the removal of nuclear cruise missiles from submarines and warships. Washington billed them as the biggest step yet in reversing the arms race after a series of treaties signed in the past decade reduced both sides' nuclear arsenals. Mr. Gorbachev initially gave only a cautious welcome to the U.S. announcement and said it raised lots of questions.

12 Soviet republics in economic union

ALMA-ATA (Agencies) — Leaders of the Soviet Union's 12 remaining republics took their first steps on Tuesday to build a new economic union on the rubble of the Soviet state. Delegates meeting in this city, capital of Kazakhstan said a three-year accord, including free movement of goods between the republics, was to be initiated later Tuesday. "The establishment of this economic commonwealth gives us the basis to pull the country out of crisis without bloodshed, without wars, be they small or large," Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said. Grigory Yavlinsky, a key official on the committee now running the Soviet economy, told reporters: "What has happened today is a remarkable event... I believe this Alma-Ata agreement will go into history." The move is the first attempt by the fractious republics to forge any kind of new union after an attempted coup in August threw the country into political and economic turmoil. Mr. Nazarbayev said it boded well for attempts to agree a separate union treaty favoured by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev which would bind the republics politically in a new, looser union of sovereign states. But delegates from several republics expressed scepticism. Georgia's minister of material resources, Igor Chkhaidze, said he would initial the agreement with reservations. "We do not accept any central bodies. We cannot accept central authority," he said. Vladimir Grinyov, a delegate from the Ukraine, said serious questions remained and it was by no means certain that the parliament of his giant republic would ratify the accord. Full details of the agreement were not immediately released but officials said a key point was that only the republics, and no central Soviet authority, could raise taxes.

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Lebanon says U.S. punishing it

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon accused the United States on Tuesday of punishing it over the seven-year-old Western hostage crisis by withholding weapons, refusing to reopen its consulate and blocking flights there by U.S. airlines. Prime Minister Omar Karami said President George Bush told Lebanese leaders in New York last week that although Lebanon was not responsible for the hostage crisis the American people could not accept the detention of Americans there and have their government deal with the country in a normal way. "We told him that we feel that this policy is a kind of punishment to Lebanon and its people," Mr. Karami told reporters at his Beirut office. "It is a kind of blockade on Lebanon when our army is not allowed to be trained in America... and when the (U.S.) doesn't hand us over weapons we had paid for, doesn't reopen the American consulate in Beirut... doesn't allow American airlines and citizens to come to Lebanon." Mr. Karami and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi returned home on Sunday after talks with Mr. Bush, Arab and European officials during an eight-day visit to the United Nations in New York where Mr. Hrawi addressed the General Assembly. Mr. Hrawi and his government are seeking to restore normalcy to Lebanon by implementing the 1989 Taif accord, an Arab-brokered plan to end 15 years of civil war. Mr. Karami quoted Mr. Bush as saying as long as the hostage crisis was unresolved it was hard to improve relations with Lebanon. Five Americans are among up to nine Western captives held in Lebanon by shadowy kidnap groups believed linked to the pro-Iranian Hizbollah (Party of God) group. Hizbollah leader Abbas Musawi said Tuesday it might take "10 or 20 years" to complete a swap of the Western hostages and missing Israeli servicemen for Arabs held by Israel. "The issue of the hostages and the prisoners is heading towards a solution, but things are in the initial stage. There are complications and counter complications, conditions and counter conditions," Sheikh Musawi told a news conference. "It is a real battle and all the means of a real battle will be deployed in it until we manage to close this file, even after 10 or 20 years," he added. Sheikh Musawi said Hizbollah was not prepared yet to return "even one corpse" of a dead Israeli serviceman to the Jewish state, stressing that U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar's prisoner-release effort was still at the level of exchanging information. "The operation has not reached the stage of exchanging the (Israeli) prisoners. The issue is still within the framework of exchanging information. It hasn't reached a stage by which we find ourselves convinced that we should return even one corpse to Israel," Sheikh Musawi said, shaking his fist for emphasis. Bearded Hizbollah guards, armed with automatic pistols and

Prince Mohammad celebrates 51st birthday

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, Tuesday celebrated his 51st birthday.

Prince Mohammad was born in Amman Oct. 2, 1940, and received his elementary education at the Islamic Scientific College in Amman, after which he attended a Swiss academic institution. Later, he pursued his studies in Britain. In 1956, he joined the military college in Baghdad for one year.

Prince Mohammad has acted as Regent for King Hussein on several occasions. He has held several posts, including president



Prince Mohammad of the Jordanian Tribesmen Council in 1971 and president of the Higher Tourism Committee in 1977. Prince Mohammad is also the present chairman of the Jordan Shooting Federation and Jordan Chess Federation.

Government denies press report about cancellation of customs fee programme

AMMAN (J.T.) — A government announcement last month about special arrangements for the expatriates to pay customs fees on cars brought in from Kuwait is still valid and there is no truth in a report by the local daily Al-Dustour Tuesday that those arrangements had been frozen, according to Prime Minister Taher Masi.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the prime minister denied that any change had been made to those arrangements, which allow the expatriates until the end of February 1992 to abide by the decision.

The government is dealing with this question in a manner that would safeguard the interests of expatriates to help them overcome difficulties, the prime minister said.

The government last month decided that expatriates can pay the customs fees on their cars by the end of February 1992. According to the arrangements, the expatriates pay only up to 85 per cent of the total amount of fees should they provide cash and pay the amount in full immediately.

The government exempted the expatriates from paying an extra fine, which is normally imposed on importing cars from a country other than its source of origin, and allowed the expatriates to pay the customs fees by instalment over 24 months provided they pay 25 per cent of the total amount in advance.

Al-Dustour daily had said that these government arrangements had been frozen by the government for the time being pending re-assessment of the value of the cars.

3 local factories closed for failing inspections

AMMAN (J.T.) — Three local factories manufacturing hair shampoo have been closed down for their repeated failures to comply with the national set of specifications and standards, according to an official statement by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Supply.

The order for the closure was issued by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Ali Abul Ragheb, who said that the closure followed repeated warnings to the factory owners to abide by the regulations concerning specifications and standards.

The closure is part of the government's ongoing efforts to ensure improved quality of industrial products in a bid to provide protection to consumers.

An official at the Ministry, who declined to name the three factories, said that similar measures would have to be taken against other factories



Ali Abul Ragheb which fail to abide by the regulations. He urged industrialists to adhere to the sets of specifications and standards in industrial production so as to ensure the high quality of Jordanian products in domestic and foreign markets.

Customs Department expects increased revenues

AMMAN (Petra) — The Customs Department expects to collect a total of JD 336 million from customs and other fees and duty on imports by the end of 1991, up by JD 50 million over last year's figures, according to a department statement Tuesday.

The statement said that the customs collections estimated in the 1991 fiscal year amount to JD 301.5 million. The statement said that the customs collections in September reached JD 37,121,758, registering an increase of JD 5,541,700 over the collections of the previous month.

September's collections registered an increase of more than JD 15 million over figures for the same month in 1990, the statement said.

It added that the total customs fees collected in the first nine months of 1991 amounted to JD 225,483,305, registering an increase of JD11 million over the same period of 1990.

Department Director Mohammad Mahdi Al Farhan said that the increase in the customs fees resulted mainly in an improvement of methods and was also due to the vast authority given to the customs centres to take appropriate decisions.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition of water colour paintings by Charles Foster Hall at the British Council.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Marwan Al 'Akkas at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Iraqi artists Mohammad Husein Jada (copper engravings) and Salah Al Yassiri (ceramics) at Aln Art Gallery.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Jamil Abed Al-Fall at Yarmouk University.

Jordanian phosphate exports to India to increase by 500,000 tonnes if plan adopted

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Indian government is likely to accept a Jordanian proposal to increase its imports of rock phosphates from the Kingdom by 500,000 tonnes to help raise capital for a joint venture phosphoric plant at Shidiyah, informed sources said Tuesday.

Agreement in principle for the project has already been reached and a formal accord is expected to be signed on Oct. 12 between the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) and India's Southern Petrochemicals Corporation (SIPCO), the sources said.

The total capital outlay for the project is set at \$100 million. JPMC will contribute \$10 million, part of it in the form of infrastructure, while SIPCO will come in with \$15 million in machinery, equipment and technology.

Inquiries in the international market to raise the rest — \$75

million — came up with the finding that the amount could be available at an interest rate four per cent more than the London Interbank Borrowing Rate (LIBOR). Subsequently, JPMC proposed that India, whose normal annual import of Jordanian rock phosphates is 1.2 million, increase the volume to 1.7 million tonnes and the proceeds from the extra deal be channelled as capital for the acid project at one per cent more than LIBOR, according to the sources.

"The Indian government is very likely to accept this proposal," said one of the sources, who preferred anonymity. "India's total purchases of phosphates from the international market is around three million tonnes and it can easily increase the Jordanian share."

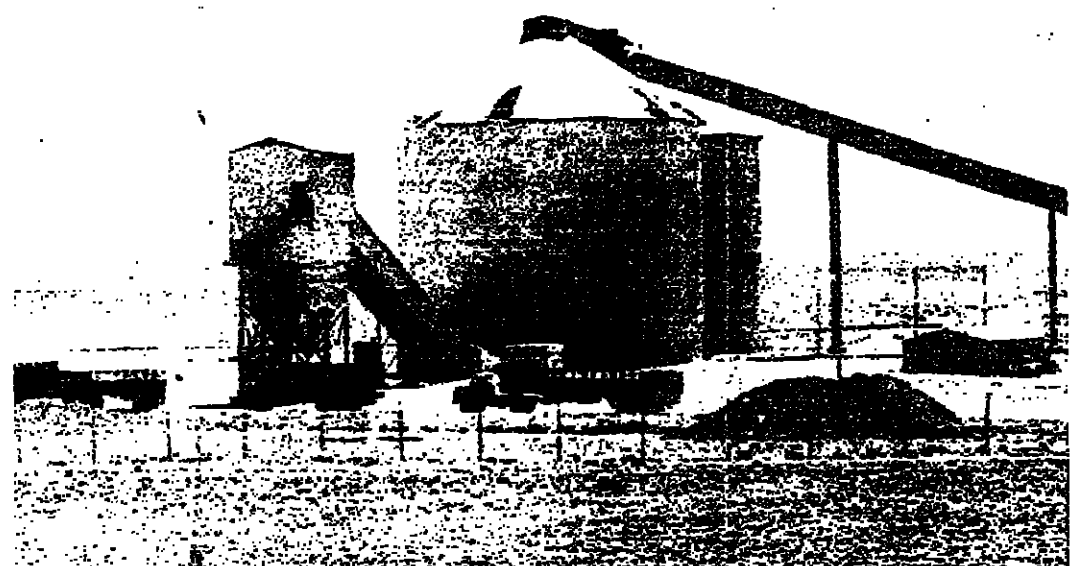
While no definite figures are available on the price that India pays per tonne of rock phosphates from Jordan, industry sources estimated that the additional import could

raise between \$50 million and \$60 million.

Before the JPMC proposal, India was expected to import phosphates and related products worth \$200 million from Jordan this year. Industry sources said it was also likely the Asian giant might choose to maintain the proposed higher volume of Jordanian imports even after raising the required capital for the phosphoric acid plant.

The entire output of the proposed 200,000-tonne plant will be purchased by the Indian government at a price less than two per cent than the market price, according to the proposal. Present plans call for production to begin by the year 1995.

It will be the first Indo-Jordanian joint venture in fertilisers and follows years of discussions between the governments of the two countries. It will be sited at Shidiyah, known to yield phosphates in rich quantities at a production



Two 20,000 tonnes silos for dry product phosphate at Wadi El-Ahmed Mine (File photo).

cost much lower than any other area in the Kingdom.

The project will increase job opportunities for at least 150 skilled and non-skilled Jordanians. A limited number of Indian technicians will be present at the plant initially to train Jordanians.

In view of the increased focus given by Asian countries to agriculture, industry sources say, the market for phosphoric

acid is growing and Jordan is best placed to house plants to manufacture the acid since the Kingdom enjoys an edge in terms of freight to markets in the Far East.

The Soviet Union was also interested in setting up a phosphoric plant in Jordan and discussions had reached an advanced stage before being frozen a couple of years ago. The JPMC remains hopeful

that the idea could be revived. The JPMC and a consortium of Japanese companies are discussing a plan to set up a plant to manufacture compound fertilisers. Most of the production of the proposed plant — which is expected to have a majority Japanese capital investment — will be exported to Jordan. Final shape is expected to be given to this project before the end of the year.

Masri opens addition to hospital, promises better health services

SALT (Petra) — Prime Minister Taher Masi Tuesday opened an annex to the government hospital in Salt which accommodates 100 additional beds and said in a statement later that medical services will be improved and upgraded at all Jordanian hospitals and health centres.

Accompanied by Health Minister Mamdouh Al Abbadi and other officials, the prime minister inaugurated the five-storey building which cost JD 2.5 million and was set up on a 5,200 dunams of land.

The new building, adjoining the old Al Hussein Hospital in Salt, has units for pediatrics, Gynaecology and Obstetrics, first aid and emergency treatment, warehouses, and administrative offices. The new building was deemed essential to cope with the growing demand of health and

medical services in the Balqa Region, said the prime minister at a meeting held after the inauguration ceremony.

He told the audience, which included provincial governors, directors of departments and heads of local councils, that the government was backing the Health Ministry's effort to expand medical services in all governorates.

The government is keen on providing the best services to all citizens despite the current economic difficulties facing the Kingdom, Mr. Masi said.

Dr. Abbadi outlined in a speech the Health Ministry's effort in providing integrated medical services and said that those services in Jordan have reached a high level of distinction compared with developing nations in the region.



Prime Minister Taher Masi opens annex to the government hospital in Salt (Petra photo).

Dr. Abbadi announced that a new hospital will be opened in Mafrqa soon and a centre for the treatment of burns will be inaugurated at Al Bashir Govern-

ment Hospital in Amman.

The Ministry of Health has prepared a plan to build hospitals in Ruseifa, Karak, Koura and

eastern Amman and will buy the Al Nadim private hospital in Madaba so as to expand medical services in the country, the minister said.



Minister leaves for Libya

AMMAN (J.T.) — Labour Minister Abdul Karim Al Dughni left for Tripoli on a three-day official visit to discuss labour related matters with the Libyan government.

Mr. Dughni, who is leading a delegation of government officials, is expected to discuss the prospect of employment of Jordanian doctors, teachers and technicians in Libya, according to Jordan News Agency, Petra. In a statement Tuesday, Mr. Dughni said that the Libyan government had expressed willingness to open its markets not only for Jordanian national products but also Jordanian engineers, doctors and teachers.

The visit, he said, was part of his ongoing endeavours to find new areas of employment for Jordanians. The minister had visited Iraq and plans a similar visit to Yemen to achieve this goal.

His Majesty King Hussein told the European Parliament last month that unemployment has soared in Jordan and presently stands at 32 per cent. The influx of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates returning from Kuwait since the Gulf crisis began in August 1990 has aggravated the situation, the King said. He said that among the 300,000 returnees so far, 83 per cent are jobless and many have no homes.

Mr. Dughni is accompanied on the Libyan visit by officials from the ministries of health, education and the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC).

Lebanon says U.S. punishing it

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submachine guns, guarded the conference hall at the party's headquarters in south Beirut's slum of Bir Al Abed.

Sheikh Musawi, called on factions holding most of Westerners missing in Lebanon not to release any of them without conditions.

"The factions that hold the hostages should be fully aware that there must be a price for every step they should make. There should be a price even for releasing a minor piece of information," Sheikh Musawi said.

The release by Israel of 51 Lebanese prisoners and the return of the bodies of nine guerrillas Sept. 11 was an "incomplete step," Sheikh Musawi said.

"A thorough package deal is in works," he said. "Thorough means that everyone who has hostages, prisoners or detainees should be included. The Israelis have arrested about 1,900 Palestinians from the occupied territories allegedly for taking part in the intifada. We should see Palestinians and Syrians among those released by Israel."

Israel said it released the Lebanese prisoners after receiving reliable information that Rahamin Al Sheikh, one of two Israeli servicemen held by Hizbollah, was dead.

The body of Samir Assad also was returned to Israel by a Palestinian guerrilla group in return for allowing an expelled Palestinian to return to the occupied West Bank. Israel also seeks information on five other servicemen missing in Lebanon since 1982.

Meanwhile, Israel detained villagers from southern Lebanon, security sources said. Israeli soldiers seized the men overnight from the village of Kfar Kila inside the Jewish state's self-extended border "security zone" in the south, they added.

The men were held on suspicion of being members of local groups fighting Israel to force it leave strip, they said.

The number of those captured was not immediately known. Beirut Radio stations said some of the seized men were taken to the Khiam prison run by Israel and its client militia, the South Lebanon Army (SLA).

Baker expected back in Mideast

(Continued from page 1)

been set up.

The United States ended a dialogue with the PLO in June 1990 after a hardline PLO faction staged an aborted raid on an Israeli beach.

At that time, President George Bush said that the PLO disassociated itself from the attack and that it issued a statement condemning attacks against civilians in principle.

But he argued "this alone is not sufficient" to keep the dialogue, which was vehemently opposed by Israel, going.

Mr. Bush also called for the PLO to begin "to take steps to discipline Abu Abbas, the perpetrator."

At the meeting in Algiers of the Palestine National Council (PNC) that ended last weekend, it was announced that Abu Abbas has resigned from the PLO Executive Committee so as not to be an obstacle to dialogue.

welcomed the U.S.-Soviet peace conference initiative, a decision seen as making it possible for Palestinians to participate in the peace talks.

Mr. Tutwiler, asked if the PNC moves caused the administration to consider reestablishing the dialogue with the PLO, said:

"No... when the dialogue was suspended, the president made very clear that the PLO would need to take a number of steps, including condemnation of the terrorist attack for which Abu Abbas was directly responsible disassociation of the PLO from that operation and steps to discipline Abu Abbas."

"We have certainly noted... Abu Abbas' departure from the Executive Committee. But that does not satisfy all of our concerns," she said.

Mr. Tutwiler declined to spell out publicly exactly what more the PLO would have to do but said the PLO itself previously had been informed in detail of the requirements.

Delegation briefed on peace process

AMMAN (J.T.) — Bishop M. Rasthorzh, chairman of the Federation of Protestant Churches of Switzerland, and his accompanying delegation met here Tuesday with the speakers of the Senate and the Lower House of Parliament for a review of the general situation in the Middle East.

Senate Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi spoke in detail about the Palestine question, noting that the Palestinian people are denied their basic rights under Israeli occupation rule and are being subjected to repression at the hand of Zionism. He urged the European countries to help establish peace and find a lasting settlement to the Palestine problem.

Mr. Lawzi spoke about the sufferings of the Jordanian people as a result of the Gulf war, that noting the Kingdom played host to more than a million refugees without waiting for international aid to cope with the situation.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Official leaves for council meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Board of the Arab Federation of Medicine and Medical Supplies Manufacturers Nizar Jardaneh will leave Amman for Tunisia Wednesday to attend the 16th session of the Arab Health Ministers Council. Mr. Jardaneh will present a paper to the council summarising the federation's activities and proposing the establishment of a common Arab medical market.

Secretary general receives ambassador

AMMAN (Petra) — Parliament's secretary-general, Saleh Al Zabi, Tuesday received in his office Chilean Ambassador to Jordan Haddad Hreizi. The meeting reviewed bilateral relations between the two countries in parliamentary fields and arrangements related to the Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference which will convene in the Chilean capital, Santiago. Jordan will take part in the conference which will start this week.

Cooperative workshop opens

IRBID (Petra) — A workshop on ways of supporting communications between cooperatives started at the Professional Associations Complex in Irbid Tuesday. Jamal Bedour, director of the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO), which is organising the workshop in cooperation with Irbid Governorate, delivered

an opening address at the workshop. He outlined the main objectives of the work of the JCO and underlined the role of women in the production process. Dr. Bedour said the JCO is trying to establish productive societies in the Jordanian countryside. The three-day workshop will discuss several educational issues and ways of enhancing cooperation between the JCO and the cooperative societies on the one hand and the JCO and the official institutions in the Kingdom.

NFCE to organise seminar

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Federation of Children's Education (NFCE), will organise a specialised seminar on the children's programmes in radio and television. The two-day seminar, which is being held on the occasion of the Arab Child Day next Monday, will discuss working papers dealing with the process of producing children's television and radio programmes, the information policies followed in selecting and producing these programmes and the impact of these programmes on children.

IDB approves loan to Hisban

MADABA (Petra) — The Industrial Development Bank (IDB) has approved granting Hisban town in Madaba District a JD50,000 loan which will be used in establishing a municipality building, according to Hisban Mayor Khalaf Al Hamid. Mr. Hamid said that the municipality will start building a secondary girls school in the town in the near future.

Jordan Times

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Editorial and advertising offices:

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Economic Forum

The water problem of Jordan

By Dr. Abdalla Maki

Every summer Amman residents feel the bite of water shortage amid mounting sensation of the imminent onset of a water crisis. Very recently that sensation started to burn, thus igniting nationwide concern. Although we might not yet have concrete scientific evidence of the exact nature and extent of the water problem, the early symptoms are there. The influx of returnees from the Gulf who accentuated these symptoms but did not create the problem. The basic makings of this problem are quite conspicuous: demand for water is on the rise and its supply is diminishing.

The deterioration of the water situation is customarily attributed mainly to population growth. That might be right but I would like to take it with a small grain of salt. Ammanites with good memory will undoubtedly remember that they complained of the same water shortage back in the summers of the sixties, even though we had at that time more (or less depleted) water resources and far less population, lower demand from agriculture and barely any demand from industry. This suggests that population growth is not the only reason behind the present water hardships. Another reason could be the way we administer our water resources.

In this particular context, one recalls the consistent report circulated during the eighties to the effect that some of our water resources have been wasted. It is said that around 30-50 per cent

of water pumped to houses and factories leaks out from our national network! Recovering this squandered quantity may not solve the problem but will certainly give us a valuable breathing space to start real work on solving it.

Real work starts from re-drawing our investment priorities. If the water problem is really crucial to us it will have to figure very prominently on the national economic agenda. Our investment priorities have to be re-arranged as to assign top and immediate priority to investments necessary to tackle it. Once a strategic decision to that effect is made the measures to deal with it will not be difficult to identify and receive national consensus. There are five options here.

We have to start with salvaging the precious water slipping away from our hands and mouths. This means rejuvenating our aging water network and spending generously on that because the return on capital here is abnormally high as it involves re-activating almost "dead" capital formation. Second we have to combat evaporation and capture every drop of surface water. This means building a dam wherever is necessary. Then water uses have to be rationalised. This means investing in education, spreading public awareness and devising water-saving systems. Desalination of sea water is another option but has to be ruled out for a long time on the basis of prohibitive high costs that not be dealt with until cheap energy resources are available.

Importing water is conceivable but it is more of a regional and international issue that has to wait non-economic developments.

But investments need finance. If the water problem is really well-defined and the related remedial measures are worked out, it will not be difficult to convince the Jordanian tax-payers, the affluent world community and international organisations to underwrite these investments. What annoys the tax-payer in developing countries is to pay taxes for financing spending which he knows nothing about, does not monitor it directly or indirectly and has no visible bearing on his daily life. If he is shown that a certain public spending contributes to solving one of the problems he faces, the tax-payer will respond very favourably. There is recent empirical evidence suggesting that tax-payers accept what may be termed "aimed taxes," that is taxes tied to specific purposes such as "fixing their highways, schools or parks." (Business Week, July 2, 1990, p. 41).

The world community is also most sympathetic to schemes relating to issues like developing and conserving water resources. These schemes improve living conditions, serve as a valuable form of external economies and thus help in enhancing the productivity of capital throughout the economy including that of foreign aid and external loans, in which the world community has a big stake. Jordan has to draw a sound investment scheme to tackle its water problem. Sound projects always find the necessary finance.

Of complexes and realities

THE PALESTINE Liberation Organisation's (PLO) bid to resume its suspended dialogue with Washington was precipitously turned down at a time when the Palestine National Council has taken great strides to promote the U.S.-brokered peace process in the Middle East. The PNC dropped Mohammad Abbas, the leader of the Palestine Liberation Front, from the PLO's Executive Committee in order to meet a persistent U.S. call for his removal after he had allegedly masterminded the beach attack against Israel in 1990. More importantly the PLO took substantive conciliatory decisions that aimed to strengthen the momentum for convening a peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict, including of course the Palestinian problem.

The last PNC meeting has been universally acclaimed for having taken bold resolutions in favour of holding peace talks by the end of October by dropping several preconditions that the Palestinians had hitherto attached to any prospective peace negotiations with Israel. Even U.S. President George Bush and his Secretary of State James Baker have hailed the Palestinians for going more than half way to expedite the U.S.-led peace efforts in the region. The Palestinians have the right to a response in kind and rejecting their call for resumption of the dialogue with Washington is not the sort of answer one would have wished for in these critical times.

It is a well-known fact that the PLO is a vital link in the peace chain that is being carefully nurtured and promoted. The U.S. above all knows only too well that the PLO still pulls many strings that affect not only the outcome but also the initiation of the projected peace talks between Israel and the Arab side. As a matter of fact, the Bush administration has held and continues to hold over and behind the scenes talks with the PLO. The repeated Baker-Ashrawi-Husseini contacts are nothing but part and parcel of this process of dialogue between Washington and the PLO. Why then the continuing dialogue if not outright negotiations between the U.S. and the Palestinian organisation cannot be accorded a more formal recognition, especially when all parties including the U.S. realise that the PLO, bone and flesh, will be at the negotiating table in one form or another when the time comes for holding peace talks?

As a matter of fact, the U.S. most of all recognises that the Palestinians must have a place at the negotiating forum scheduled to be launched rather soon and that the PLO will fill that place in the final analysis.

Let us face it: Time is overdue for all the parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict to start talking to one another directly and in the most forthright manner possible. If the U.S., under whose umbrella the entire peace exercise will be conducted, refuses to talk to one of the central parties, then all hope for peace in this part of the world will be doomed before the search for it is kicked off. For all these reasons, Washington should also shed off its complexes and begin to talk once again formally with the PLO.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE U.S. offer to reduce nuclear weapons drew welcome and cheers from many countries of the world, but such a decision had a very limited effect in the Arab region, said Al Rai Arabic daily. It said that unless the Americans reduce the vast nuclear arsenal which Israel possesses and with which it continues to threaten the Arab World, the seeds of tension will remain in the Arab region. Washington is called upon to take a serious step to stop Israel's nuclear activities and liquidate the nuclear weapons found in Israel's arsenals at a time when Washington and Moscow are following this pattern to rid the world of the danger of a holocaust, the paper called. It said that there can be no reason for Israel to remain the sole nuclear power in the Middle East at a time when its government continues to refuse to sign any treaty to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and has been rejecting any international inspection of its nuclear facilities. The paper said that if this area were to enjoy peace, it should be a nuclear-free zone which can contribute most beneficially towards the consolidation of security and stability. If Washington carries out such a step, said the paper, it can by all means enhance the momentum towards the peace process and a permanent settlement, as it can also vastly boost its credibility in the eyes of the Arab World. The paper said that the Israeli nuclear arsenal remains the main source of danger threatening the whole region and if peace is to be achieved through America's good offices Washington should take immediate steps to rid the region of all mass destruction weapons.

A guest columnist in Sawt Al Shaab daily focused attention on a news report that the government has allocated JD 45 million in the 1992 fiscal budget to pay salary increases to civil servants and other employees. Salem Maqattash said that the civil servants would of course be happy to receive an increment that would help them cope with the ever rising cost of living and inflation in Jordan. But such joy is not to last long since government sources have reported that government subsidies on basic foodstuff, which now amount to JD 20 million, would be lifted by the beginning of the next year and that the government is contemplating a reconsideration to the fees charged on telephone, and facsimile communications, water and electricity consumption and others, the writer pointed out. He said that a quick glance at the cost of living index in 1990, as published by the Central Bank of Jordan, shows that the cost of living in the Kingdom more than doubled between 1985 and 1990. He said that prices of vegetables, fruit, dairy products, cigarettes, clothes, shoes, rent and other commodities and services have risen sharply, which justifies a raise in salaries. But, he said, should the government remove the subsidies on basic foodstuff and raise the fees on services, not a single civil servant would feel satisfied and more complications would be created for the ordinary citizens.

By John Ross & Norman Solomon

The following is the first in a 4-part series of a working paper presented at the International Seminar on News Coverage During the Time of War: Objectivity and the Role of Journalists, held in Amman, Sept. 28-30, 1991. John Ross, Pacific News Service and San Francisco Examiner correspondent in Latin America, has covered guerrilla wars in the Andes and social conflicts in Central America and Mexico. He recently returned from a human rights fact-finding tour of Kuwait. Norman Solomon coordinates the peace desk for the media watch group FAIR, based in New York City.

HISTORY testifies that whenever the United States marches off to war, the caissons of corporate media are in the vanguard of the military effort. Despite deep public divisions about costs, conscription, and carnage, the drum roll of war traditionally drowns out criticism; voices rejecting the political rationales for such beligerency are soon muted by the lords of the press. "You furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war," William Randolph Hearst wired his reporter on the ground in Cuba in 1898, boasting of his ability to sway the U.S. Congress into a declaration of war. Just as during the recent conflict in the Gulf, Hearst sold a lot of papers a century ago, shouting down anti-interventionists and trumpeting the glories of the first great U.S. imperialist excess during the so-called Spanish-American War (1898-1900). During World War I, jingoist press barons like Hearst — branding those who objected to involvement as traitors — cheered government jailings, executions, and deportations of this alien menace to rising U.S. military might. Reactivated for World War II, the propaganda juggernaut fought the Good Fight against Hitlerian Evil at the same

time that it justified the U.S. incineration of Hiroshima's and Nagasaki's civilian populations as proof of America's moral supremacy.

But even that horrendous conflagration failed to assuage the boosterism of U.S. corporate media for Washington's designs. As "The Yellow Peril" of Japan segued into China's "Red Hordes" in Korea, the specter of "Communist Cancer" creeping in from the East pumped up circulation and incited witch-hunts. The cold war was good for business.

But the Pentagon's manipulation of the media in wartime ran into a curious booby-trap as Washington plummeted into its next military adventure. The hostilities in Vietnam were the first to be reported in full-blown detail on U.S. television and, while military commanders sought to limit press access, the chaotic field situation and general demoralisation of U.S. troops allowed reporters to roam the Indochina peninsula, graphically illustrating for the folks back home (however inadvertently) the deadly folly of intervention. Although voice-overs, editorial policies, and the patriotic loyalties of most correspondents re-

mained supportive of the U.S.'s presence in that war of national liberation, the film shot and shown to an increasingly disaffected U.S. public contrasted sharply with Pentagon optimism, and — in the war's later years — played a major role in the attrition of popular backing on the home front.

Stung by the imprint of defeat in Vietnam, the Pentagon fingered the media for the death of 55,000 young Americans and swore to assure no repetition of the error. Under the tutelage of Ronald Reagan, the military was given free hand to exclude media witnesses in impending invasions. Grenada was one of the Reagan White House's first military expeditions. Under a new press plan, slavishly agreed upon by major media, only hand-picked reporters would cover the taking of that tiny tropical isle. But even the agreed-upon "pool" news

gatherers were left behind on the dock when the flotilla sailed south into action. And when the press corps tried to island-hop to reach Grenada in time for the mop-up, it was kept at bay by the U.S. Navy which actually threatened to blow reporters out of the water if they attempted to land. One mark of the success of the Pentagon's press blackout: the military was able to conceal scores of friendly-fire deaths, and the bombing of a mental hospital that took 23 lives gained scant international attention.

Proxy wars in Central America were Reagan's next military cards. Ever cognisant of massaging the media where it counts, a White House starring Hollywood's leading ideologue encouraged New York Times reporters and NBC camera crews to go into battle on the side of the Contras and the Salvadorean military. On the flip side of the dial, Salvado-

rean rebel film and first-hand accounts of Contra massacres in Sandinista villages were excluded from U.S. television because they exhibited "leftist" bias.

The December 1989 invasion of Panama was President George Bush's baptism in news management during wartime. Corporate media embrace at Mr. Reagan's handling of Grenada six years earlier had been blunted by Pentagon readjustments. But, despite the revamped guidelines, the restrictions placed upon reporters — flown in a day late to put the Pentagon spin on the assault — infuriated the working press. Bottled up at a U.S. military fort under the pretext of personal danger, the press corps broke out of its corral and headed for Panama City — but not before a photographer for Spain's prestigious El Pais was gunned down by a U.S. Army tank. Despite the rebellion at mili-

Lies in the sand

President George Bush's successful spin control on Panama proved to be dress rehearsal for the management of news during the Gulf war. For Washington, the stakes were far higher in the summer of 1990. A half-million troops would eventually be deployed in that war zone to defend the flow of oil to the industrial

(Continued on page 5)

LETTERS

Human value or hypocrisy?

To the Editor:

I have followed the different letters published by the Jordan Times on the issue of censorship on television and more precisely the censorship of kissing. Although one might not think that this issue is of national interest, to me it is an issue that is indicative of a social problem that is being furthered by the attitude of those in charge of Jordan Television for fear of entering or allowing a dialogue over this very sensitive issue.

The fact that violence is not censored but kissing is shown very clearly that our minds are more preoccupied with the sin of sex than it is with human value and crime. Why is it safe to allow our children to watch men killing each other on a background of thrilling music but unhealthy to see a husband kissing his wife with a background of relaxed music? What is the message from this double-pronged approach to Western culture (if that is what it is)? Are we trying to tell our children that it is okay to kill each other but it is not right that husband and wife remain affectionate and loving to each other? Are violence and killing upheld Arab values but affection a social taboo that was imported from the West?

I don't think so. If Arabs are known for anything then it is their highly-charged emotions and if our literature is something to go by then our literature books of the past are filled with legendary love stories written out in the most explicit and sensual manner. Who are we kidding? Our social taboos are products of our present fears and hang-ups. They are problems which were introduced to us in modern times. We have always gone back to our past to prove to our new-born conservatives that men and women interacted and loved openly in the past. Their love was cleaner and more honest than anything our contemporaries are witnessing now precisely because the interests of our forefathers did not centre on the vices of women's beauty but were allowed to wander into more constructive issues like their work and future plans.

So the issue is not Arab tradition versus the ugly West. The issue is that we have been taught, by similar mentalities to those who censor the kissing scenes, that public affection is a social crime that we should not even watch let alone practice. For the lady who wrote a letter saying that she did not want the little girls to be harassed by boys who watched kissing scenes on television, I say that it is precisely that attitude which creates problems like these she mentions. To those who think that kissing happens only in Western movies, I say that maybe our adults need a few lessons that the teenagers seem to have learnt without parental guidance.

Women are harassed on the streets of Amman by frustrated and immature teenagers and young men who do not have any other forum for interacting with the women of the country unless it is one of two: sin or marriage. Most of them are too young for marriage, the social taboos tell them that interaction between the sexes is a sin so they go to the streets and hassle all the women who dare venture outside their homes.

This issue of kissing on television and our attitude towards it is only the tip of the iceberg of a great struggle between the know-it-all adults, like Mr. Samir Ghawi, who did not mind going around the U.S. doing everything short of offsprings but has now come back to teach us the lessons of celibacy, and those who would like to see a Jordan where all citizens, male and female, learn how to interact with each other properly. This can only happen if things like this are discussed openly and without the fear of being labelled as non-conformists of Westernised liberals who have rejected their culture. I want to see us go back to our culture which has been twisted and turned by self-imposed guardians such as those who keep talking of moral values which the population should accept without argument while they themselves have acquired their knowledge through experience.

The issue is not whether to kiss or not to kiss, the issue is why did we even consider cutting out decent human interaction on television, and here I am not talking about sex scenes or explicit love images, when we do not cut out all the other violent scenes which have been proven scientifically to cause harm to children and influence their attitudes towards human life. But give me a break, really, I do not think that any of our children will be

eternally harmed if Mickey Mouse was allowed to kiss Minnie Mouse on our afternoon cartoons.

Normana Murad,
Amman.

Let nature take its course

To the Editor:

I believe that there are many more pressing issues in our society that call for the public to speak up and take a stand than the issue of "kiss or not kiss," raised by Mr. Nidal Ibrahim and which received a number of controversial replies from readers. A good example on what I am saying is Mr. Guido Remero's lengthy article on the loopholes of the touristic sector in Jordan, which to his dismay did not provoke any public opinion, yet I found myself rushing to comment on Mr. Ghawi's and Ms. Bin Tareef's criticism of Mr. Ibrahim's views with respect to JTV's censorship of Western movies (Jordan Times, Oct. 1).

First of all I believe that censorship, if it has to be exercised, should not be restricted to romantic scenes. There are many more sides to Western movies that seem to escape censorship, namely those that indirectly promote discrimination and propaganda against nations or cultures.

I would like to point out to Ms. Bin Tareef that "wanting our children to feel safe in their country" takes much more than censoring love scenes. Restricting our debate to television, what about all the shooting and murdering of cowboy movies? The reckless car racing of detectives in police movies, the dangerous stunt acts, smuggling of drugs, to name but a few of the usual scenes in feature films and TV series, not only Westerns. Don't you think these should also be censored in order for children and teenagers to see but the good and avoid all evil. Ms. Tareef wants kissing scenes cut off because she describes them as "destroying scenes which provoke crime." It's a crime to underestimate teenagers' mental and physical awareness and instincts. Forbidding children from seeing those scenes is not a preventive measure against crime. Ms. Bin Tareef is also worried about girls being victims of chasing from boys imitating those "destroying scenes." Why should girls be the innocent victims and boys the aggressors? I've seen cases of quite the opposite.

As for Mr. Ghawi's letter, begins by "I am not against everything that is Western..." and I wish to assure Mr. Ibrahim and the Jordan Times readers that I wear a shirt, trousers and a necktie, and then he moves on to say "I belong to the Abaya, Hatia and Iqal..." and I drink Arabic coffee. Please make up your mind as to where you belong, Mr. Ghawi. Then you say you are an Arab or are you a bedouin or a Jordanian? Because, correct me if I'm wrong, Egyptians are Arabs, aren't they? and they are major producers of movies of the sort you want censored. Mr. Ghawi considers Mr. Ibrahim as one who "has got out of his skin and dipped in the Western culture." Why? Because he calls on JTV to leave viewers of Western movies the choice of what scenes to see or not see. This is not offence to our Arab tradition. Wearing trousers and a necktie and then basting other aspects of Western culture is offensive to that culture. I refer here to Mr. Ghawi's statement that he "respects the values of other cultures anywhere."

If we are all encouraging democracy and freedom of expression and choice, then we should let nature take its course, as Mr. Ibrahim puts it. We cannot condemn Western cultures, which Mr. Ghawi describes as "of outright, unrestricted and unlimited freedom," because some of them are pioneers of democracy.

Frida Midanat,
P.O. Box 2770,
Amman - Jordan.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Owen: Foreign Office has pro-Arab tilt

By Jonathan Freedland
The Jerusalem Post

LONDON — A former British Foreign Secretary has denounced London's Foreign Office, saying it has a "passionate commitment to the Arab cause" and noting a "marked Arab identification among British diplomats."

The comments were made by Dr. David Owen, who served as Foreign Secretary in the last Labour government, from 1977 to 1979.

His remarks, which appear in his newly published memoirs "Time to Declare" and in an interview in today's Jewish magazine "New Moon" will be seen as the most authoritative confirmation yet of a view that is common among pro-Israel activists here: the Foreign Office is a bastion of pro-Arab sympathy.

Mr. Owen writes that he took over at the Foreign Office to find a department with a clear "Arab influence." And as the first British Foreign Secretary ever to visit Israel, he told New Moon "there was great resistance" from the Foreign Office to the trip in February 1978.

His remarks are particularly scathing regarding the department's role in the 1973 decision not to supply shells to Centurion tanks sold to Israel by Britain. "I was appalled," writes Mr. Owen. "I considered it then, and still do, the most cynical act of British foreign policy since the Suez."

He adds: "It showed not just Arab influence within the Foreign Office, but a total lack of principle in standing by one's commitments." He says he had "contempt" for this "cruel act" which he says permanently damaged Anglo-Israeli relations. Mr. Owen, who was Britain's

youngest ever Foreign Secretary, explained the apparent anti-Israel bias as having been caused by three factors: "a phenomenon similar to the fascination that Arabia held for T.E. Lawrence," "a basic British antisemitism," and oil.

In New Moon he goes further, describing an "appeasement mentality" that "has existed for a very long time" in the Foreign Office. But he senses a change: "There is a younger generation coming into lead roles who are people of a more robust character," he told the magazine.

The interview also reveals that Mr. Owen had to struggle to win European support for the Camp David Accords, particularly with the French president at the time. "Giscard d'Estaing was very hostile to Camp David... Britain was often in a minority of one." He claims partial credit for winning a "fair and sympathetic hearing in Europe" for the American position on the peace process.

Elsewhere in the book he ranks former British premiers according to their sympathy for Israel: "Sir Alex Douglas-Home, and Edward Heath, have been the prime ministers most critical of Israel; Churchill, Harold Wilson and Margaret Thatcher are the most deeply committed friends."

The Owen Memoirs reveal an obvious warmth toward Israel. He describes dinners with Moshe Dayan, who he says had a "captivating quality" in conversation, and with Yigal Yadin. He also writes of his great friendship with Amos Oz, whose literary agent is Mr. Owen's wife, Deborah.

Mr. Owen, who is retiring from Parliament at the next election, now leads the minority Social Democratic Party, after leaving Labour in 1981.

Lies in the sand

(Continued from page 4)

North. Proclaiming a "New World Order" as euphemism for U.S. domination of the international sphere in light of the Soviet collapse, Mr. Bush early on enlisted corporate media in his campaign of deception. In the grand tradition of White House media manipulation during wartime, major television networks, dailies, and news weeklies were signed up for the coming military crusade and were promised a front seat at the fireworks. As usual, the Pentagon promulgated new rules. This was to be a sanitized war in which there would be no announced body counts, which had so troubled press officers in Vietnam (Los Angeles Times, Jan. 20, 1991). Indeed, death itself was to be banished from the battlefield as the Pentagon moved to bar all press access to returning U.S. casualties.

In the preface to "Unreliable Sources," a new book examining corporate media credibility, Martin Lee and Norman Solomon remark on other Pentagon press restraints during the war in the Gulf.

"Journalists, who had to sign papers agreeing to abide by press regulations before they received a visa for Saudi Arabia, found American military activities throughout the region to be largely off-limits. All photographs, video and battlefield dispatches had to be cleared by military censors. Reporters were only allowed to travel in predesignated (126 person) 'pools' with U.S. military escorts always at their side. Pool requirements made it much easier for U.S. officials to steer journalists clear of certain operations. Feisty reporters were frequently excluded. According to a report by the Fund for Free Expression (a project of Human Rights Watch), the administration appears to have favoured those journalists whose coverage is likely to be favourable to the

war effort."

"Press censorship had much less to do with protecting U.S. troops than with projecting the right kind of image so that Americans back home would support the war. Some of the rules were downright ludicrous, as when a reporter at a press briefing in Saudi Arabia asked if General Norman Schwarzkopf weighed 250 pounds. 'General Schwarzkopf is a big man,' a U.S. officer responded, 'but regulations prohibit the disclosure of his weight.' Details deleted by U.S. censors, but reported in the British press (London Independent, Feb. 5, 1991), included the fact that American pilots were shown pornographic films before taking off on Stealth bombing missions.

"To be sure, reporters occasionally groused about the restrictions. The pool system is turning journalists into essentially unpaid employees of the Department of Defence," said New York Times correspondent Malcolm Browne, who once won a Pulitzer Prize for reporting from Vietnam.

In the same vein, U.S. Secretary of Defence Dick Cheney told the New York Times that Gulf news coverage was "a model for the future" (May 5, 1991). Presumably that model included the performance of United States Marines who seized Time magazine photographer Wesley Hays and blindfolded him, holding him captive for 36 hours under armed guard when he strayed away from an escorted press pool (Los Angeles Times, Feb. 12, 1991).

The arrest of Mr. Hays and other reporters who did not abide by Pentagon press restraints gives new meaning to the term "prisoner of war." Even Fred Hoffman, a former Associated Press reporter who as a Pentagon employee helped design the Defence Department's press policies for Grenada and Panama, was appalled. "What's happening in the Gulf is

much more restrictive than we ever contemplated," he told the New York Times on the same day. Mr. Cheney characterised that policy as "a model for the future."

But despite their government's clampdown, enthusiasm by the representatives of U.S. media for Operation Desert Storm was fervent. While a few reporters had actually been taken prisoners by American troops in the Gulf, major news broadcasters made the U.S. public prisoners of the war projected into their homes. The London Independent's Robert Fiske was aghast when he spotted American reporters dressed up in U.S. military uniforms. The message such uniformed news gatherers dispatched to the folks back home often identified the U.S. military as "our" troops; the twisted rationale of the U.S. mission was explained to small children in such terms in between Saturday morning cartoons on two out of the three biggest TV networks. No homage to Mr. George Bush's efforts was more exhilarating than that hosted by the Gridiron Club on March 23, when 60 prominent Washington journalists cheered the president's triumph over the evil Saddam Hussein.

Perhaps Michael Deaver, Mr. Ronald Reagan's disgraced spin doctor, best characterised the White House's success at managing the news from the Gulf. Speaking the day after U.S. Stealth-bombers slaughtered hundreds of Iraqi women and children in a Baghdad neighbourhood shelter, he complimented the Pentagon for its deft media handling of the potentially-troubling event. "If you were going to hire a public relations firm to do the media relations for an international event, it couldn't be done any better than this is being done," the celebrated Washington public relations expert told the New York Times (Feb. 15).

Palestinians will present own case

(Continued from page 1)

line Liberation Organisation (PLO), Prince Hassan said that there was a unified Arab stand towards conveying this message and stressed its importance. Prince Hassan said that the political peace march requires intensive Arab efforts over many years and entails inter-Arab political coordination. Jordan's position towards the proposed peace conference, he said, is principled and based on international

legitimacy represented by United Nations Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

On the political and environmental dimensions of the regional problems resulting from the Gulf crisis, he recalled that a proposal was made by the Jordanian delegate to the United Nations to ban threats to the environment as a weapon in war and noted that the proposal was made in response to a request by specialised international organisations and has

no political implications.

"It appears that humanitarian issues and environmental issues only became news worthy after several weeks effectively of the crisis and of the war and today I must mention that as we attempt in the Jordanian mission to the U.N. to propose a resolution forbidding the use of environment as a weapon of war, it is sad for me to feel effectively that as we speak about the Gulf crisis the emphasis, the interest, is basically on the weapons issues," he said.

"Understandably weapons issues dominate, but here we attempt to look at basic security in terms of human beings, in terms of the effects of the crisis to the human environment, and yet, as I said the high ground continues to be very much weapon related."

Addressing the closing session of a three-day symposium on News Coverage during war, Prince Hassan stressed the need for holding political inter-Arab meetings at this time when political balance in the region is lacking. Prince Hassan said that Jordan has always encouraged inter-Arab dialogue and meetings to coordinate Arab stands towards various issues. He voiced hope that a specific mechanism for future inter-Arab dialogue at all levels will be developed and stressed the importance of crystallising a new perception of inter-Arab cooperation taking into consideration priorities of Arab work such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and conditions of Palestinian people in the occupied territories.

Prince Hassan said, Jordan regretted the "forcible migration" from Kuwait to Jordan and through Jordan to the occupied territories.

Chemical hormone could put sheep shearers out to pasture

By Wilson Da Silva

Reuter

SYDNEY — One of Australia's best-known images — the sun-tanned sheep shearer clipping fleece at breakneck speed — could soon become a piece of history.

Australian scientists have invented a hormone that causes the fleece to peel off, saving the animal from a traumatic experience and, they say, potentially slashing the price of wool.

Commercial use of the hormone may be as little as two years away, which could be good news for Australia's troubled wool industry and its 166 million sheep.

The genetically-engineered hormone EGF, which a U.S.-owned drug company plans to market, weakens wool strands on the back of a sheep and makes the fleece peel off.

"Within about 10 days of injection, the animal is bare," said Dr. Oliver Mayo of the Animal Production Division of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO).

"Sheep don't like to be shorn, it's very traumatic for them. This is a lot easier on the animal and you get this beautiful, evenly-cut creamy-white fleece," he said.

Added CSIRO's Dr. Terry Leche: "There are no second cuts required for the spots that were missed and it leaves the animal with a nice, smooth and very comfortable short coat. The process is quite trouble-free."

EGF, meaning epidermal growth factor, is injected into sheep and over a five to 10-day period weakens its wool follicles.

When wool resumes growing, the weak strand is pushed out and the fleece's weight on the outside forces it to drop.

Pitman Moore Australia Ltd, a subsidiary of Incera Group Inc. of the United States, has bought the marketing rights to EGF and expects to introduce it to the market in the next two years.

The firm's market development manager, Ron Hailing, said that EGF was in the development phase and looked very promising.

"We're looking at ways of producing EGF in commercial quantities, which requires genetic engineering techniques, and we've

done that," he said.

But several obstacles remain. The firm must develop a whole new way of harvesting wool and managing sheep.

Unlike shearing, which cuts off only the top layers of the coat, EGF sheds all of the fleece, right down to the roots.

While this produces a higher quality coat, it also leaves the sheep naked and prone to injury and sunburn.

Sheep must therefore be wrapped in a "hairnet" jacket for six weeks, allowing new wool strands to push through skin layers, break the surface and grow long enough to provide skin protection.

The jacket must be put on immediately after injection. After six weeks, it is removed and the wool can be peeled off as one continuous fleece.

If widely adopted, EGF will spell an end to the back-breaking work for sheep shearing, which increasingly relies on imported labour.

Shearing accounts for about 25 per cent of the cost of wool production, amounting to \$203 million a year in Australia, the world's biggest wool supplier.

It costs about \$2.74 to shear a sheep, including labour and equipment — double for rams, which are heavier and more aggressive.

The price of the EGF process, including the polypropylene jacket, must therefore be brought down to match this if the process is to be viable. Pitman Moore are confident they can.

A spokesman for the government's Wool Research and Development Corp said the process was likely to be applied first to rams before spreading it across the industry.

Pitman Moore is working to develop inexpensive, lightweight and comfortable jackets that cannot be damaged by the sheep in the paddock and can be reused several times.

It seeks a global market — that's around 1.17 billion sheep. But there are problems. When injected with the hormone, most pregnant ewes suffer abortions and both males and females lose their appetite for a day.



Will hormone make their lives easier?

The researchers have found that there is a window around 90 to 110 days after pregnancy during which ewes can be injected without aborting. But Dr. Mayo said it would be preferable if pregnant sheep were not injected

at all. The hormone stays less than 24 hours in the sheep's body and is said to cause no long-term dam-

age. Authorities have approved sheep injected with it as fit for eating, even if slaughtered shortly after injection.

Iraq clears helicopter flights

(Continued from page 1)

The United States hinted at military action against Iraq if it did not comply with U.N. resolutions on access for the team.

Iraq Sunday gave a U.N. advance party permission to base the helicopters at Al Rasheed airfield in Baghdad.

It had previously objected to flights over downtown Baghdad and insisted the U.N. helicopters use only the Habbaniya airfield in western Iraq.

Mr. Livingston said flight corridors over Baghdad were the only outstanding issue but he did not anticipate problems because the U.N. team was willing to comply with the Iraqi restrictions.

Diplomats believe the Iraqi authorities will be able to pinpoint the

whereabouts of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Livingston said U.N. technicians, barred for Al Rasheed airfield Monday, received their security passes Tuesday. More than sixteen tonnes of maintenance equipment was being flown in for the helicopters, he added.

Mr. England's team, which includes seven Americans, will supervise the demolition of the 28 declared Iraqi missile launch sites during its seven-day stay.

Baghdad has said more than 20 sites were destroyed by allied bombing but Mr. England said they would ensure the concrete pads and electric cables beneath them were completely useless because otherwise it would be relatively easy to erect new launchers.

Addressing the closing session of a three-day symposium on News Coverage during war, Prince Hassan stressed the need for holding political inter-Arab meetings at this time when political balance in the region is lacking.

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Prince Hassan said, Jordan regretted the "forcible migration" from Kuwait to Jordan and through Jordan to the occupied territories.

IMF-World Bank team holds talks

(Continued from page 1)

the two world bodies are adopting towards Jordan.

In general, said another source close to the talks, the IMF and World Bank negotiators were satisfied with Jordan's adherence to previous agreements.

"Jordan has a very good track record as far as the IMF and the World Bank are concerned," said the source. "The recommendations presented to government could be described as representing a vital turn in the course of the Jordanian economy," said the source who also preferred not to be identified. He declined to be more specific.

Other sources said points discussed during the delegations' talks in Amman in-

cluded subsidies on foodstuffs, a moratorium on any increase in government salaries and creation of new jobs in the civil service and hikes in telephone, water and power supply service charges.

The recommendations come ahead of the finalisation of the draft fiscal budget for 1992, and the government's response to the IMF is expected to be reflected in the budget figures, analysts noted.

A green light from the IMF and the World Bank is essential for Jordan before it can resume debt rescheduling negotiations with foreign creditors.

The government, in line with earlier agreements with the IMF, has already cut down part of the subsidies by introducing a coupon system

and a free market for imported meat. But officials have said that increasing the charges for drinking water was almost ruled out, while hikes in telephone and power supply could be considered, even though there is big opposition to such increases.

Asked whether the IMF and the World Bank were considering any low-cost loans to Jordan to help the Kingdom handle its balance of payments, one source said: "Everything depends on the ongoing discussions and the government's response to the recommendations."

The source said the IMF and the World Bank were confident that the Gulf Arab states would gradually resume their financial assistance to Jordan. "It may not come tomorrow or the day after, but there is no doubt that Arab aid to Jordan will be resumed," the source said.

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Financial Markets

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound*	1.7490	1.7490
Deutsche Mark	1.6664	1.6674
Swiss Franc	1.4525	1.4533
French Franc	5.6790	5.6855
Japanese Yen	132.47	133.18
European Currency Unit	1.2280	1.2287

Forward Rates for 1/10/1991

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.31	5.50	5.50	5.62
Sterling Pound	10.37	10.12	10.06	9.95
Deutsche Mark	9.06	9.25	9.31	9.31
Swiss Franc	8.12	8.06	7.93	7.87
French Franc	9.25	9.43	9.43	9.43
Japanese Yen	6.68	6.37	6.18	5.93
European Currency Unit	9.81	9.87	9.87	9.87

Forward Rates for 1/10/1991

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	322.5	6.85	Silver	4.14	.095

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Rate	Offer
U.S. Dollar	1.7990	1.8000
Sterling Pound	1.1991	1.2051
Deutsche Mark	.4712	.4733
Swiss Franc	.4714	.4738
French Franc	.1207	.1213
Japanese Yen	.5149	.5175
Dutch Guilder	.3647	.3665
Swedish Krona	.1126	.1132
Italian Lira	.0550	.0553
Belgian Franc	.0200	.02010

Other Currencies

Currency	Rate	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7990	1.8000
Lebanese Lira	.07695	.07710
Saudi Riyal	.1826	.1836
Kuwaiti Dinar	1.7990	1.8000
Qatari Riyal	.1826	.1836
Egyptian Pound	.2000	.2100
Omani Riyal	1.7650	1.7900
UAE Dirham	.1857	.1859
Greek Drachma	.3700	.3650
Cyprus Pound	1.4580	1.4680

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Markets

Index	29/9/1991 Close	30/9/1991 Close
All-Share	122.01	122.13
Banking Sector	103.16	105.19
Insurance Sector	121.28	122.34
Industry Sector	151.06	151.25
Services Sector	128.58	128.75

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

Currency	Rate	U.S. dollars
One Sterling	1.7465/75	1.7465/75
One U.S. dollar	1.1317/22	1.1317/22
One Canadian dollar	1.6682/92	1.6682/92
One Deutsche Mark	1.8807/17	1.8807/17
One Dutch guilder	1.4538/45	1.4538/45
One Swiss franc	34.3741	34.3741
One Belgian franc	5.6850/6000	5.6850/6000
One French franc	1248/1249	1248/1249
One Italian lire	133.20/30	133.20/30
One Japanese yen	6.0875/25	6.0875/25
One Swedish crown	6.5275/25	6.5275/25
One Norwegian crown	6.4380/4430	6.4380/4430
One Danish crown	353.40/353.80	353.40/353.80

IMF reappoints Camdessus as managing director

WASHINGTON (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said Monday that Michel Camdessus has been reappointed to a second term as managing director.

The former French bureaucrat, who has worked assiduously to keep the IMF at the centre of everything from the Third World debt crisis to the remaking of the Soviet Union, was unanimously reappointed by the fund's board.

"Our joint work over the past five years has been the source of many satisfactions, but much remains to be done," Mr. Camdessus, 58, told the board in a brief acceptance speech. "It is with pleasure and anticipation that I agree to continue in my position."

Mr. Camdessus, who joined the IMF in January 1987 after serving as the head of the French central bank, has a reputation as a demanding boss but one with a sense of humour. He will begin his second five-year term on Jan. 16.

Under his leadership, the IMF has moved away from being a monetary institution and become more involved in economic development of the Third World, much to the chagrin of some of his critics who see that as a job for the World Bank.

A deft technician and able negotiator, Mr. Camdessus has won the trust of developing countries that have long been suspicious of the IMF and the tough economic policies it prescribes as conditions for its loans.

But he has also managed to convince industrial nations to come up with extra money for the IMF, including a \$60 billion increase in the fund's capital last year.

Monetary sources said the IMF is likely to find itself even more in the thick of things during Mr. Camdessus' second term in office.

The United States and other industrial nations are looking to the fund to play a key role in helping eastern Europe and the



Michel Camdessus

Soviet Union move from communism to capitalism, in part because they lack the money to do the job on their own.

Mr. Camdessus is not without his pride. Monetary sources said that earlier this year he convinced the board to raise his annual salary by more than 25 per cent to \$285,000 to keep it in line with that of another former French bureaucrat, Jacques Attali. Mr. Attali heads the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which was set up this year to aid eastern Europe.

A Roman Catholic, Mr. Camdessus is married and has six children.

Aid from rich countries to poor increases in 1990

PARIS (R) — Aid to developing countries from major industrial nations increased by \$7.4 billion last year but, as a share of economic output, the level of assistance was no higher than in the late 1970s, the OECD has said.

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) annual tally of official development assistance (ODA) showed aid rose to \$54.1 billion from \$46.7 billion in 1989.

ODA is defined as grants and soft loans provided by the official sector to promote economic development or welfare.

The United States regained its position as the largest single donor, with \$11.37 billion, followed by France and Japan.

Norway allocated the highest percentage of its gross national product (GNP) — the total value of its output of goods and services — to Third World aid in 1990 at 1.17 per cent.

Overall, as a share of GNP, aid grew to 0.35 per cent from what the OECD described as an exceptionally low level of 0.34 per cent in 1989.

This was below 1988's level of 0.36 per cent and unchanged from the average achieved between 1977 and 1981 despite regular exhortations by the United Nations to step up aid.

Officials said the United States argued that its forgiveness of \$7 billion of military debt owed by Egypt should be counted because the economic effect was similar to that of fresh aid.

Other countries, notably Japan, objected, saying that it was inappropriate to count relief of military debt at a time when poor nations were being urged to cut defence spending.

The argument over military debt raised the question of whether the ODA figures should include forgiveness of other types of debt, such as export credits. Officials said the dispute had not yet been settled.

The OECD said its initial tracking of aid to eastern Europe suggested that there had been no major diversion of assistance from developing countries.

Poverty in Asia rises

BANGKOK (R) — The gap between rich and poor is increasing in much of Asia despite the economic growth of recent years, a United Nations report says.

With little apparent hope of the situation improving, it says, civil strife and dissent could spread.

"Poverty, inequality, oppression, inadequate social infrastructure and related circumstances making for social distress continue to exist throughout much of the region despite economic development," said the survey by the Bangkok-based U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

The report is due to be presented to a ministerial conference on social welfare in Manila next week.

Traditional ills like drug abuse, prostitution, violence and illiteracy persisted while new problems such as AIDS, environmental damage and urban overcrowding made matters worse, it said.

The report said about three-quarters of the world's poor, a total of about 800 million people, lived in Asia, most of them in the Indian sub-continent.

"In some of these countries the number of people living in abject poverty has increased and the gap between 'haves' and 'have-nots' has widened," the report pointed out.

ESCAP reported progress in some fields. Health care had improved, life expectancy was longer and infant mortality reduced.

But migration to the cities by people in search of a better life meant that rural poverty had merely been transplanted to urban slums.

Drug abuse was reaching epidemic proportions in some countries and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) would kill millions of men, women and children by the end of the century, the report said.

Thailand alone could have as many as two million to 3.4 million HIV-positive cases — the virus that causes AIDS — by the year 2000, it estimated.

Canada plans law to end public service strike

OTTAWA (R) — Canada pressed ahead Monday with back-to-work legislation to end a strike by 70,000 government employees which has delayed flights, clogged U.S. border crossings and halted grain shipments.

"They put safety and security at risk and are endangering the economy," Treasury Board President Gilles Loizeau told the House of Commons.

"We cannot allow these disruptions to resume and the Public Service Alliance of Canada is unwilling to accept the best offer that can be made," he said.

Pickets caused delays at one border crossing in Windsor, Ontario, and delays were reported at Toronto's Pearson International Airport, the country's busiest. Airports in Vancouver and Winnipeg were also targeted for strike action.

In the capital, about 2,000 public servants rallied outside the prime minister's office, blocking traffic.

The government, which put the bill on hold last week to resume contract talks, said defiant workers will face stiff fines when the legislation becomes law within a week.

Union members resumed Friday a strike that had paralysed government services for 10 days earlier in September.

Bankers see debt crisis in Latin America waning

WASHINGTON (R) — Latin America has turned the corner and the end of the debt crisis is finally in sight, U.S. bankers say.

For the first time in almost a decade, more money entered the region in 1990 than left it, new reports show.

With the sole exception of communist Cuba, all Latin American nations have embarked on radical economic reforms that are attracting foreign investment and bringing capital back into the region.

Privatisation drives and relative economic stability are turning the region's stock markets into some of the world's most profitable.

"The debt crisis is basically over," one banker in New York said.

BankAmerica's Peter McPherson says the reforms are doing the trick. "The underlying problem was always more one of economic policy, reform and stability than it was debt per se," he said.

Not that the area's \$425 billion combined debt is showing any signs of shrinking, let alone disappearing.

The key is whether nations can repay it. Bankers say Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, Colombia and Bolivia are now capable of servicing their debts and Argentina is joining the club.

Mexico, whose inability to repay creditors triggered the region's debt crisis in 1982, is leading the recovery trend after joining a U.S. plan for commercial debt reduction in 1989.

In exchange for debt cuts, President Carlos Salinas' government launched an ambitious liberalisation drive. As a result, the economy grew by almost four per cent in 1990 and is expected to grow by nearly five per cent this year.

"Mexico is the perfect example that you can grow with debt," one banker said.

Mexico is also negotiating a free-trade pact with the United States and Canada that is expected to spread across the Americas and create the first continent-wide free trade zone.

Chile is the other star in the hemisphere and has been tipped by Washington as next in line for a free trade deal.

Even Peru and Nicaragua, which had become financial pariahs after limiting or suspending their payments, have now returned to the world's capital markets with the help of rich nations.

"The changes that are taking place in the continent have no precedent," said Isaac Cohen, Washington envoy for the U.N. Economic Commission for Latin America.

But Brazil, the biggest debtor in the Third World, has everyone holding their breath.

President Fernando Collor de Mello's government has clinched an agreement with creditor banks to repay \$8.5 billion in arrears.

But legal battles have bogged down its plans to privatise state-owned companies. Inflation is running at 16 per cent a month and Brazil's year-long efforts to get a \$2 billion standby loan from the International Monetary Fund have proved fruitless so far.

Chaumet Brothers go on trial

PARIS (R) — Two Paris jewellers whose high society customers once included Elizabeth Taylor and King Hassan of Morocco went on trial Monday charged with fraud over the spectacular collapse of their business four years ago.

Jacques Chaumet, 65, and his brother Pierre, 63, were found to have incurred some \$350 million of debts when they filed for bankruptcy in 1987. If convicted, they face up to five years in jail.

The brothers are accused of using the 200-year-old family business as an illegal bank, giving high rates of return on the value of jewels deposited in their vaults.

The indictment also charges that they presented fraudulent balance sheets to international banks to secure loans, and secretly sold off customers' jewels concealed to them.

The Chaumet business, based in Paris's elegant Place Vendôme, first encountered difficulties in the early 1980s when fluctuations on the world diamond and foreign exchange markets created severe cash flow problems.

King Hassan and President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire were among the Chaumets' clients, judicial sources said. But neither head of state figured in the list of more than 100 companies and individuals seeking compensation in the case, the sources said.

Ratners' loss widens sharply

LONDON (AP) — Ratners Group PLC had a net loss of £21.2 million (\$35.8 million) in the first half of the year, as recession hurt consumer spending in its key U.S. and British markets.

The jewelry store operator said its loss for the six months ended Aug. 3 compared with a net loss of £1.15 million (\$1.94 million) in the same period a year ago.

The company said it has a pre-tax loss of £17.7 million (\$29.9 million) compared with pre-tax profit of £9.3 million (\$15.7 million).

Sales rose 22 per cent to £45.4 million (\$76.1 million) from £37.7 million (\$62.6 million).

Ratners purchased Kay Jewelers of the United States for \$328.1 million last year.

The company said it typically records twice the sales volume in the second half as in the first.

"As we approach the all-important Christmas trading period, we are still awaiting the first signs of an improvement in consumer spending in the U.K. and confirmation of a sustained upturn in the U.S.," said Gerald Ratner, chairman and managing director.

"Most forecasters are now predicting a recovery in consumer confidence in the final quarter and this would be particularly advantageous for the group," Mr. Ratner added.

"However, the depth of the recession and the effect on our trading will clearly have an impact on the profit outcome for the year," he pointed out.

Ratners' more than 1,100 British stores had an operating loss of £11.7 million (\$19.8 million) compared with profit of £13.3 million (\$22.5 million). Sales declined 8.8 per cent to £231.7 million.

Results in the United States, where the British company has 1,000 stores in 43 states, were better.

Vickers announces first loss

LONDON (R) — Manufacturing conglomerate Vickers has announced its first ever loss, due mainly to restructuring costs at struggling prestige carmaker Rolls-Royce. Vickers PLC posted a pre-tax loss of £4.3 million (\$7.5 million) for the first six months to June 30 against a profit of £39.8 million (\$69 million) last year.

"I must warn shareholders that 1991 will be a very poor year for Rolls-Royce motor cars and the outlook for 1992 remains uncertain," said Vickers, chairman and chief executive, Sir David Plastow. "In consequence, the results this year for Vickers as a whole will be very unsatisfactory," he added.

At operating level Vickers posted a profit of £16.2 million (\$28 million) which was just over half last year's £30.2 million (\$52 million).

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Stocks surged after the Bank of Japan cut bank reserve ratios. The Nikkei average closed up 460.57 points or 1.93 per cent at 24,377.01, above 24,000 for the first time since Aug. 2.

SYDNEY — A shrinking current account deficit injected fresh life into the market. The All Ordinaries Index leapt 1.5 pct to close 24.0 points higher at 1586.1.

HONG KONG — Heavy late afternoon buying of blue chips sent the Hang Seng Index 67.18 points higher to 4,023.87 at the close.

SINGAPORE — Profit-taking and stop-loss selling erased most early gains. The Straits Times Industrial Index rose 1.02 to 1,361.65.

BOMBAY — Prices declined after rumours the government might postpone plans to deregulate steel prices. The BSE Index closed 12.59 points or 0.67 pct up at 1,872.69.

FRANKFURT — Shares ended mixed in dull, lacklustre trading. The Dax Index rose 2.59 points to close at 1,609.62.

ZURICH — Swiss shares ended slightly firmer but higher Swiss interest rates checked potential gains. The All-Share Swiss Performance Index closed 3.7 points up at 1,082.5.

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Najah Al Mouji
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THE KIT KAT
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SATAN'S SOLUTION
(Arabic)
Show: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30 p.m.

Yugoslav army warns Croatia of impending retaliatory attacks

BELGRADE (AP) — The Yugoslav army Tuesday threatened Croatia with retaliation for attacks on military barracks and prepared for a major offensive in the eastern part of the republic.

Armoured vehicles and trucks loaded with soldiers and weapons left Belgrade early Tuesday, Croatia said it repelled an attack on the eastern stronghold of Vukovar overnight, and that shelling resumed about 9 a.m. (0800 GMT).

"For each garrison or other army facility attacked and taken, we will destroy a vital facility of the town concerned," the army command said in a statement released through the Yugoslav News Agency Tanjug.

"In a military response to taking several barracks and other military facilities since the latest ceasefire agreement, we will launch offensive actions in a part of the Republic of Croatia," it said.

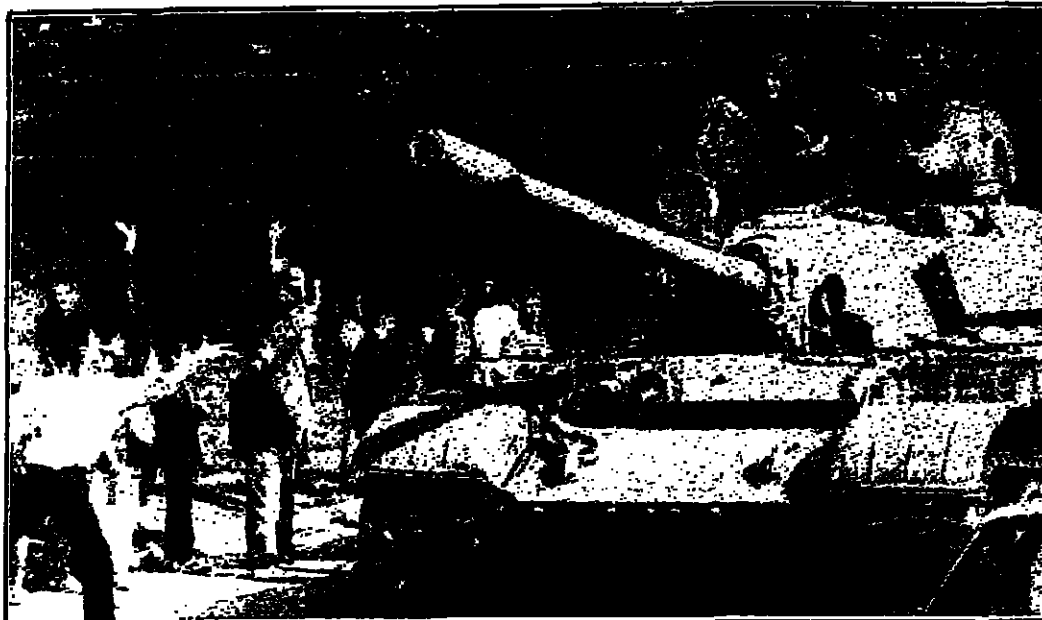
The federal military accused Croatia of ignoring a truce agreement reached nine days earlier. It did not say where it would attack, but warned civilians to clear out the areas of conflict.

In Belgrade, the capital of both Yugoslavia and Croatia's rival Republic of Serbia, Associated Press photographer Dusan Vranic reported seeing scores of armoured personnel carriers and trucks loaded with infantry and howitzers leaving the city early Tuesday.

Another column, with tanks and armoured personnel carriers, left the city about 24 hours earlier, heading west toward the Croatian border.

Some of the federal armoured reinforcements took up positions inside Serbia border with Croatia Monday, while other units crossed into the breakaway republic.

A Croatian Defence Ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Monday that Vukovar was under attack and



A Yugoslav federal army tank crew being greeted as it passes through Belgrade to Croatia

that about 200 army vehicles were carrying in reinforcements.

Croatian Defence officials said three brigades totalling 4,000-5,000 federal troops were repelled late Monday afternoon.

But Radio Belgrade said Yugoslav armoured and motorised units, backed by the air force, were advancing in what it called "a battle for the liberation" of Vukovar.

The city occupies a strategic point on the Danube River border with Serbia. Capturing it would allow ethnic Serb insurgents, aided by the army, to control a large enclave in Slavonia, a region of eastern Croatia that has been the scene of much of the fighting since Croatia declared independence June 25.

There were signs of disunity even as the military pushed into Croatia. Zagreb Radio said late Monday that the federal navy had dismissed the commander and his deputy in the Boka Naval Sector, on the Adriatic. Both men were Croats.

On Monday, Western European government representatives meeting in Brussels postponed a decision on sending a multinational force to quell the fighting in Croatia that has killed more than 600 people in the past three months.

Slovenia and Croatia declared independence June 25, but agreed in July to delay actual independence until Oct. 7. Slovenian radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corp. in London, said Monday the republic would take part in a peace conference in the Netherlands but would hasten moves toward independence.

There were reports of heavy fighting Monday night around Vinkovci and Osijek, in Slavonia, and near Pakrac, Novska and Gline, all south of Zagreb.

Tanjung also reported clashes near Croatia's border with Montenegro, the small southern republic allied with Serbia.

Earlier, Yugoslav Federal Premier Ante Markovic appealed to the hardline president of Serbia,

Slobodan Milosevic, to stop a general mobilisation of his republic's men of military age and avert all-out civil war. Mr. Markovic, a Croat who despite his position retains little authority, said such a move would promote civil war and "the aggression of one state on another."

Croats have accused Serbian leaders of instigating the fighting in Croatia in an attempt to expand Serbia's territory. Ethnic Serbs, who make up 12 per cent of Croatia's 4.5 million people, say they rebelled to keep their areas from being part of an independent Croatia.

The federal army intensified its role in the fighting after Croatian militiamen surrounded federal military bases in the republic in mid-September. The Croats, however, put up stiff resistance. Army morale is falling, as hundreds of soldiers desert and reservists refuse to go to the front.

Croatian forces have captured a number of army bases, seizing badly needed weapons.

Gorbachev threatens to quit over union treaty

MOSCOW (R) — President Mikhail Gorbachev has added urgency to his bid to keep the Soviet Union together by threatening again to resign if his ideas are rejected.

As leaders of a dozen Soviet republics gathered in the Kazakhstani capital Alma-Ata Monday to discuss a new economic framework for the crumbling union, he spoke to journalists in Moscow.

Gorbachev nailed his colours to the proposed democratic and decentralised union of sovereign states, saying the signing of its founding treaty had to start as soon as possible.

"If I see that my convictions, my point of view and my position are not accepted, I will resign my post at once," he said, looking strained under the television lights.

"Without integration the country faces break-up, and that is a fatal path. I will not be a part of such an approach."

Mr. Gorbachev, who was speaking informally after a meeting with Austrian Chancellor Franz Vranitzky, earlier announced another dramatic break with the Soviet past — the separation of foreign intelligence-gathering from the KGB security police.

He appointed a close aide, Yevgeny Primakov, to head the new espionage agency.

Mr. Gorbachev threatened to quit over the union treaty issue earlier in September. The threat is somewhat hollow because if the union broke up completely, his post as Soviet president would vanish anyway. But it gave added force to his pleading.

Mr. Gorbachev said he and Russian leader Boris Yeltsin would put forward joint proposals on the union treaty soon. The first republics could begin signing a treaty in principle in October and others follow suit later, he said.

The prospects were clouded further when the Ukraine, the second most powerful republic, indicated it was not even ready to sign the less ambitious economic agreement to be debated in Alma-Ata by around 12 republics Tuesday.

Interim Prime Minister Ivan Silayev and radical economist Grigory Yavlinsky, author of the agreement, were also flying to Kazakhstan, Soviet news agency (TASS) said. The Kremlin hopes to persuade at least the main republics to sign within days.

But the Ukraine's top man in the Soviet interim government said agreements on each aspect of economic relations would have to be thrashed out before any overall agreement was signed.

"The Ukraine is in no hurry to sign the treaty before concrete agreements on each problem are reached," Vladimir Fedorov told Reuters in Moscow.

The dangers of an uncontrolled break-up of the world's biggest country were underlined yet again in ethnic and political conflicts in half a dozen republics.

In Georgia, a month-long armed confrontation seemed to be heading for a climax Monday, evening when tens of thousands of supporters of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia gathered outside the television centre, main stronghold of rebel National Guardsmen.

But they withdrew peacefully. Earlier talks broke down with the government and opposition deadlocked. "No-one has any idea how this will end, it's a total dead-end," a local journalist said. The Communist-dominated parliament in Tajikistan, in central Asia, met one opposition demand in the political crisis there by lifting a six-day old state of emergency, TASS said.

Army seizes power in Haiti; Aristide in exile

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — President Jean-Bertrand Aristide flew into exile Tuesday after the army ousted him and the first democratically elected government in Haiti's nearly two centuries as a nation.

The acting army commander, Brig. Gen. Raoul Cedras, announced Monday night that the military had taken control after a day of violence in which at least 26 people were killed and 200 wounded.

The military, which has long dominated Haitian politics, accused Mr. Aristide of interfering in its affairs. Indeed, Mr. Aristide had retired the army's high command and was rumoured to be training an elite for his protection.

Gen. Cedras urged calm and spoke of creating a "serene climate favourable to the next election."

But many Haitians feared an explosion of violence in port-au-prince over the ouster of Mr. Aristide, 38, a tremendously popular Roman Catholic priest who had championed the cause of the poor against dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier and a succession of military-dominated governments.

Sporadic gunfire rang out early Tuesday in Port-Au-Prince, the capital of 1 million, but few ventured outdoors after midnight.

During Mr. Aristide's nearly eight months in office, he forged a good relationship with the United States and set about improving the lot of the 6 million people in the Western hemis-

phere's poorest country. Last week, he made a triumphal visit to the United Nations.

Western governments expressed outrage at the coup, with the U.S. embassy denouncing it as "an outrageous attack." The Organisation of American States demanded Mr. Aristide's return to power.

The takeover began with mutinies at an army base and a police station Sunday night. Rebel elements fired on Mr. Aristide's private residence at daybreak and on his entourage as it later headed to the national palace.

The soldiers later seized the palace, captured Mr. Aristide and took him to army headquarters, said his foreign minister, Jean-Robert Sabailat.

A prominent Haitian politician, who spoke on condition he not be identified by name, said Prime Minister Rene Preval and Information Minister-Laurence Jocelyn Lasguez also were arrested.

Diplomatic sources said Venezuela, France and U.S. officials negotiated with the coup plotters to save the president's life. U.S. Ambassador Alvin Adams accompanied Mr. Aristide to the airport, although it was not known what role the Bush administration had in securing Mr. Aristide's safe release.

Mr. Aristide left for France via Caracas at 0715 GMT aboard the private eight-passenger Lear Jet sent by Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez, airport and diplomatic sources said.

New Zaire premier says corruption over, famine near

KINSHASA (R) — Zaire's new Prime Minister Etienne Tshisekedi said corruption was over after 26 years of iron rule by President Mobutu Sese Seko, but warned of impending famine and appealed for foreign help.

Mr. Tshisekedi's bold start Monday as premier of a "consensus government" could not conceal the political minefield ahead as he started work in uneasy tandem with Mr. Mobutu.

The two men, once as close as brothers but bitter enemies since 1980, were only persuaded to

shake hands by the persistence of foreign news photographers.

The president, who has run the vast central African country as a personal fief since 1965, was forced by intense Western and domestic pressure to share power with a man he once put away in a limatic asylum.

Yet Mr. Mobutu remains head of state, backed by an immense personal fortune and broad army loyalty, a week after soldiers angry at not being paid launched an orgy of looting in which 117 people died.

Romanian premier's power boosted after 'coup plot'

BUCHAREST (R) — Petre Roman has reclaimed the title of Romanian prime minister after riots that forced his resignation last week were described in parliament as a Moscow-style coup attempt.

Widening the breach with his erstwhile patron President Ion Iliescu, Mr. Roman disavowed his resignation and said voters in the May 1990 elections had given his National Salvation Front (NSF) party sole right to govern and nothing had altered that.

At the same time, the 45-year-old technocrat and force behind Romania's drive to a market economy was pushing for early elections, apparently confident he could win.

The arrest of alleged coup leaders could well be the next chapter in the 21-month political drama that has followed Romania's bloody revolt and summer execution of Communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu.

"I have information which clearly shows the existence of an organised subversive activity aimed at the removal of the present democratic regime," Senator Gelu Voicila Voiculescu told parliament.

"The aim... was to stop the beginning of democratic life organised on a parliamentary basis as well as to compromise the new regime in the West."

Sen. Voiculescu named the plotters — senior men in Mr. Ceausescu's omnipotent former

secret police, the Securitate, as well as Communists who have resurfaced in new guises. "All the money came from Moscow," he said, alleging the plotters were financed by the same people who tried unsuccessfully to topple Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in August.

As in Moscow, once-privileged forces, alarmed that liberalisation had gone too far, were fighting back with all the subversive techniques at their command to put themselves at the top of a restored old order, disguising it as the popular will, Sen. Voiculescu said.

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Mr. Roman made no immediate comment on Sen. Voiculescu's allegations, but he has expressed bitterness at Mr. Iliescu's apparent capitulation to the miners and from the outset he called last week's riots a Communist putsch.

"I never resigned in the proper sense... under circumstances of violence there can be no resignation," Mr. Roman said Sunday.

COLUMN

'I never touched my daughter,' Barr's father says

NEW YORK (R) — The parents of U.S. television comedienne Roseanne Barr Arnold have denied her accusations that they had abused her as a child. They said through their attorney that they were considering suing People magazine for detailing the charges. "I never had any incestuous relationships with her and we don't understand (the accusations)," the comedienne's father, Jerry Barr, said in an interview on the CBS Television network. Ms. Barr, who prefers to be called by her married name Arnold, told a meeting attended by sexual abuse victims in Denver this month that her father would tell her to fondle his genitals while he took a bath, "telling me sit on his lap, to cuddle with him." Mr. Barr, 38, also said her mother psychologically and physically abused her when she was a small child. Her television series, Roseanne, a comedy about a blue-collar family, is among the most popular in the United States. Barr's mother, Helen Barr, said on the CBS programme that "any allegations that say I molested her sexually, incestuously, I deny 100 per cent." Helen Barr said her daughter had not spoken to her in over a year and added: "I would truly like to see her heal, not talk about it, but truly reach out in love and heal within a family."

Irate wife does something nasty

LONDON (R) — A woman ripped off one of her husband's testicles with her fingernails during a blazing row, a British court heard. Dorreth Curritters, 40, was angry with her husband Lascelles after he got home late one night in January and locked him out of their bedroom. The pyjama-clad husband had forced the bedroom door half-open when his irate wife grabbed him in the groin. He looked down to see his wife holding a blood-covered testicle, prosecuting lawyer Lisa Matthews told a London court. "As his wife dropped the testicle on the floor he fell backwards on the landing and passed out," she said. Curritters admits causing grievous bodily harm to her husband but says she did not intend to hurt him so badly. The couple, who have lived together for 20 years and been married for five, still share the same house but are getting a divorce. Judge George Shindler remanded her on bail for three weeks pending further reports on the case.

Panty salesmen are singing in the rain

TOKYO (R) — Typhoon rains which lashed Japan in September brought misery to millions — but boosted profits for underwear salesmen. Chain store officials reported soaring sales as people bought new underpants rather than wait for wet ones to dry. "Thanks to the rain, we sold more underwear — people have to leave their laundry hanging outside longer," a spokeswoman for Seiyu said. Seiyu sold 20 per cent more women's panties between Sept. 10 and 18 than in the same period in 1990, she said. "We usually don't sell much underwear in September, the peak is in the summer and winter." Seiyu's sales of men's underwear in the same period rose by 10 per cent. Another chain store, Jusco, reported sales of women's underwear rose 13 per cent in the first two weeks of September from a year ago, due partly to the rain. A third, Ito-Yokado, said it sold five per cent more men's underwear in September due to the rain and colder temperatures. Tokyo experienced twice its average rainfall in September.

N. Zealand cannabis smokers to get on-the-spot fines

WELLINGTON (R) — New Zealand Justice Minister Doug Graham said he would propose downgrading penalties for smoking cannabis to match certain traffic offences. Mr. Graham told Radio New Zealand cannabis smoking was now a relatively minor offence and police investigations and court cases over the drug's use were expensive and unnecessary. At present users are fined after a court case. "I do not support the de-criminalisation of cannabis... my suggestion was that the police could in effect issue an infringement notice the way they do with some traffic offences," he added. Cannabis users — widespread in New Zealand — would have the choice of paying a fine or contesting police evidence, Mr. Graham said.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

Army retakes power in Togo

LOME (R) — Soldiers loyal to Togo's military President Gnassingbe Eyadema seized control of state radio Tuesday and said they had dissolved a civilian transitional government. The soldiers said they rejected reforms made by an August pro-democracy conference, which stripped President Eyadema of most of his powers, and did not recognise the High Council of the Republic, an interim cabinet set up to guide Togo to multi-party elections. Eyadema's 45-year-old human rights lawyer appointed prime minister by the conference. The radio played martial music and songs praising President Eyadema. Crowds poured out to the streets in the seaside capital Lome as news of the coup spread, and military convoys moved through the city. There were no further details.

India takes over U.N. presidency

UNITED NATIONS (R) — India's U.N. ambassador, Chinmaya Rajaninath Gharekhan, Tuesday took over the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. The presidency rotates monthly among the council's 10 non-permanent members and five permanent members according to the English alphabet. Mr. Gharekhan, who succeeds Jean-Bernard Merimee of France, refrained from taking over the post precisely at midnight when members were deliberating on whether to have a meeting on Haiti. Mr. Merimee remained in his post to finish the session.

Seoul seeks support against North

SEOUL (Agencies) — South Korean President Roh Tae-Woo ordered his government Tuesday to seek world, diplomatic support to force North Korea to submit its nuclear programme to international inspection. "The most important goal for us now is to make sure that North Korea accepts nuclear inspection of its facilities," Mr. Roh told his ministers, state radio said. "To achieve this goal, we must concentrate our efforts from all angles on winning diplomatic support in cooperation with foreign countries including the United States." Mr. Roh met the cabinet a day after he returned from a North American tour during which he addressed the U.N. General Assembly on the occasion of North and South Korea's formal entry into the United Nations. U.S. soldiers withdrew Tuesday from a strategic border with North Korea, handing over their camps and patrol mission to South Korean troops for the first time in 38 years. A brief ceremony marked the U.S. departure from the sensitive area just south of the truce village of Panmunjom, inside the demilitarised zone that separates the rival Koreas, South Korean officials said. The withdrawal was symbolic of a U.S. military shift from leadership to a supporting role in guarding the 248-kilometre Ko can border.

C'ina celebrates National Day

PEKING (R) — China celebrated Tuesday the 42nd anniversary of Communist rule, its state-run media trumpeting National Day as the people to rally behind the Socialist cause. "China's fate always in the hands of the Chinese people, and their belief in socialism is unshakable," said a front-page editorial in the official Communist Party newspaper, the People's Daily. Major newspapers proclaimed socialism as the sole road China must follow in editorials on National Day, anniversary of the late Chairman Mao Tse-tung's proclamation in Peking's Tiananmen Square of the founding of the Communist state. "Whether China's socialist cause can stand the stringent tests imposed on it and whether China's Socialist system can display its full superiority depends on whether the nation can achieve satisfactory economic growth," People's Daily said. It was apparently referring to China's isolation after the crumbling of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe.

U.K. stands down 'scramble' pilots

LONDON (R) — Britain said that its fighter pilots in Germany will no longer be at five minutes' notice to "scramble" to meet a threat to the West. Since the end of World War II, Royal Air Force fighters in Germany have been on "quick reaction alert" 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. "Now, the changed security situation in Europe means that this precaution is no longer necessary and will be discontinued from Oct. 2, 1991," a Defence Ministry statement said.

EC ministers scrap Dutch blueprint for political union

BRUSSELS (R) — European Community (EC) states have dealt the Netherlands a crushing diplomatic blow, rejecting a new Dutch blueprint for EC political union with only 10 weeks left to hammer out a deal.

At a stormy session in Brussels Monday, EC foreign ministers agreed that the proposal by the Netherlands — which holds the EC's rotating presidency — should be shelved and negotiations should resume on the basis of an earlier paper by the previous incumbent, Luxembourg.

A German diplomat quoted an official close to Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek as saying during the meeting: "We are being slaughtered."

Diplomats said they could remember few previous defeats on such a humiliating scale for an EC presidency, but the other 11 EC nations appeared at pains to spare the Dutch as much political embarrassment as possible.

The main points of disagreement as the bloc tries to rewrite its founding treaty are how to forge a more formal common foreign and security policy.

The prospects were clouded further when the Ukraine, the second most powerful republic, indicated it was not even ready to sign the less ambitious economic agreement to be debated in Alma-Ata by around 12 republics Tuesday.

Interim Prime Minister Ivan Silayev and radical economist Grigory Yavlinsky, author of the agreement, were also flying to Kazakhstan, Soviet news agency (TASS) said. The Kremlin hopes to persuade at least the main republics to sign within days.

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